
McGLUSKY

THE SEAL POACHER

A. G. HALES



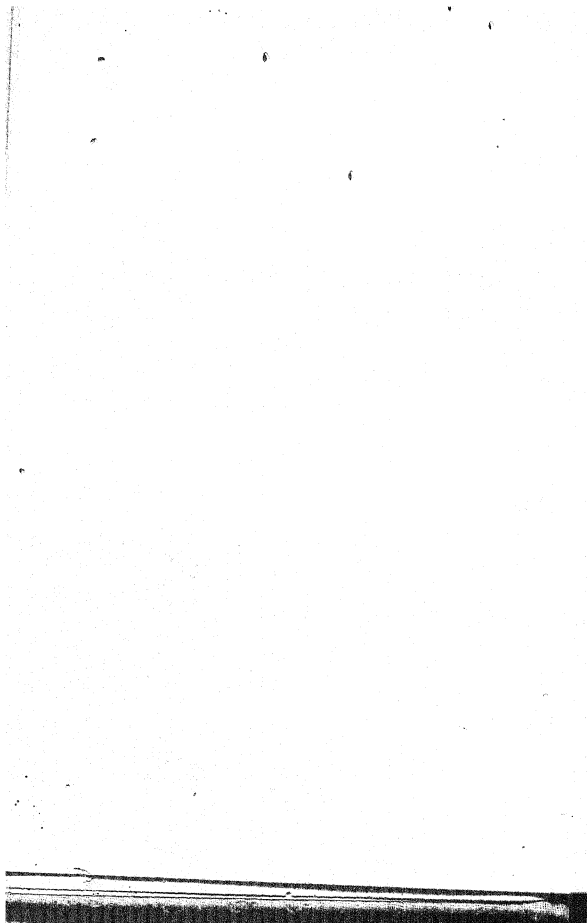
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A. G. HALES

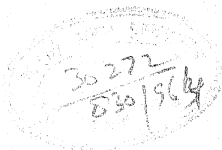
THE AUTHOR of all the McGlusky books that are read all over the world, from London to Tokio, from Japan to the ends of the earth. The number of McGlusky readers are as the sands by the sea shore. No first class library is without the McGlusky books, and they may be seen on the film screens, they are crowded with action. They were written that they may live, and are counted amongst the immortals.

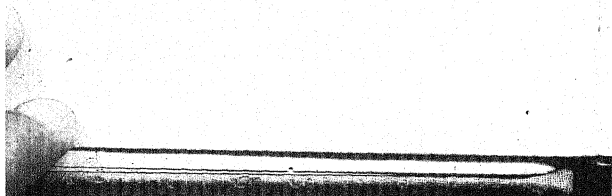
*A. G. Hales asks for no other monument than
his works.*



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McGLUSKY

THE SEAL POACHER

CHAPTER I

MCGLUSKY MEETS JACK LONDON

"LAUGH, durn you, laugh, let ithers do the weeping, lift up your hearts and sing; let ithers do the crawling and the creeping." As he uttered these words a tall, raw-boned giant of a man who was in the saloon bar of the Palace Hotel in Frisco, lifted his glass and with a circular movement of his great brawny right arm he saluted the half dozen men who were gathered round the table with him, and then tilting his head back he threw the cocktail that the expert bar tender had concocted for him down his sun-tanned neck. He did not drink the liquor savouring it on his palate like most connoisseurs, he just tossed the liquor down, and bringing his fist down on the table with a resounding thump he brought the waiter on the run to his side, and as that functionary drew near the splendidly built man who had just expressed his opinion of life in general in one of the proverbs that bubbled so freely from his lips, said tersely:

"Fill up again, bar tender, and make it snappy."

Waterfront Jo, as that bar tender was known to pretty nearly all the habitués of San Francisco, smiled with a humorous quirk at the corners of his mobile lips and replied in answer to the big fellow's demand to make it snappy:

"Guess I ain't dropped any lead, or horse shoes in my boots, McGlusky, and if I don't fill your glasses as rapidly as you can empty them it's because I know there's not a harder drinking bunch around town this moment than you are."

The easy familiarity of the bar tender's mode of speech might have offended the ears of most people who were not acquainted with the mode of life in that Queen City of the Pacific that smiled so gaily upon the rippling blue waters of the Golden Gate. But any old hand in the place would have told them that Waterfront Jo was one of the most notable men in that city that was renowned for notable men all the world over. Waterfront Jo had been in his day not only a gold digger, but one of the most successful treasure seekers that even California had ever produced. He had made dollars by the million, and he had gambled and speculated and lived riotously while his streak of luck held to him, and when his streak deserted him, and he had to turn round and face life in the city broke to coppers, he had not, as the big man Jamie McGlusky phrased it, swung down from the bough of a tree by his tail, and bewailed his losses to the listening skies, but he had jumped into the first job that offered, like the he-man he was, and that job happened to be a waiter's position in a Frisco bar, and he was only able to hold that job down because in the days of his wealth he had taken a pride in manufacturing new drinks for the pleasure of his countless friends; the thing that he had studied for amusement's sake when he could count his dollars by the million, now proved his only mainstay in life, and he soon became known as the champion compiler of cocktails that even that home of cocktails had ever known.

Waterfront Jo was known to notoriety for yet another cause. Nowhere, not even in the frontier camps, or even in the swift shooting quarters of the city itself, lived there a man so quick on the trigger as this ex-

millionaire and present-time dispenser of soothing drinks. A less quarrelsome man than Waterfront Jo it would have been hard to have found if one had swept the city and raked it over with a small tooth-comb. But the days of his youth and middle age had been passed amidst scenes where no man could become a notability of any kind unless he was well able to keep his end up in any kind of company. In Jo's hectic periods on the gold fields, there had been moments when rough-necks sought him out, and had forced quarrels upon him merely because he was a man whose name was upon most men's tongues, and those who came with a chip upon their shoulders determined to have trouble whether they bought it, or brought it with them, or had it given to them on a plate, seldom left his presence unsatisfied. More than one had left his vicinity on a shutter. He was a very quiet-spoken man with sloe-black eyes that looked the world in the face steadily but unchallengingly, eyes that could almost bore a hole through a plate-glass window. His hair was jet-black and sleek and always was it kept in the pink of good order. At the time when this chronicle opens there were a great number of grey hairs in the black, but not nearly so many as one would have expected to see considering his age, for he was one of those men who looked preternaturally youthful right on to the verge of old age.

The bar tender's acts were as good as his words, for he was a magician at the mixing of the fancy drinks that were the vogue in the city at that era. Very swiftly he returned carrying the tray which he slid with expert skill into the centre of the table at which McGlusky and his fellow carousers were seated, and remarked as he did so:

"There you are, gents, Egg Nog, Mint Julep, Manhattan Eyewash, and Pacific Slope Poison; that about covers your order?"

As he ceased speaking he stood smiling at McGlusky, who had drawn his well-lined wallet from the inside of his shirt and had placed a bill in the bar tender's hands remarking:

"Well, Old Timer, I don't see your own drink popping up above the horizon, what's wrong with it, eh?"

"Nothing wrong with it, McGlusky," smiled Jo. "But when I was a kid I was taught that it's manners to wait until you're asked, so as I guessed somehow that you'd include me in the round of drinks I didn't fill mine up, but I'll rectify that in the shake of a wild duck's tail."

Moving with noiseless speed Jo filled his liqueur glass from a private bottle behind the bar and came back, and raising his liquor to his mouth's level, he said:

"Here's to the old days, boys, may they come again, and come soon, they can't come too quick to suit me."

All seated around the table drank that toast with a hearty roar that proved the type of men that they were, every one of them was a man of the open spaces and rolling blue seas. There were men there who were silver white under their hats, others who were lingering lovingly in the thirties, but all were men of experience, either cattle men from the way back portions of the woolly west, or traders to the near-by South Sea Islands or gold fossickers who had carried picks and pans, and had trampled mountain ranges and desert slopes in search of the temptress which men call gold. There were some who had spent a goodly portion of their lives as hunters, and could tell tales of the days when the buffalo ranged wild in herds of tens of thousands strong, and one at least of the company had a name that had rung through the length and breadth and the circuit of America as an Indian scout, and as an Indian fighter in the days of his hot-blooded youth, which now lay far, far behind him. When the others spoke to him of the old Indian fighting days they did so almost affectionately, for

in spite of his wonderful record as a scout and as a battler against terrible odds, there had never existed on this planet a milder-mannered man or a stauncher friend. He was a good American, and when you have said that you have exhausted the national vocabulary.

Strange, is it not, how the real doers of deeds of daring are usually the most retiring and least effusive men in any kind of company; it is usually the fellow who has never stalked anything much more deadly and dangerous than a snowshoe rabbit, who thrusts out his chin aggressively, and glares at the world at large as though itching to be up and making war upon something or somebody, the real doers of great deeds know by hard-gleaned past experience that the doing of such things is not all skittles and beer.

The group of hard-bitten men around the hotel table, looked what they were, a band of storm birds, as untamed, and as untameable as the stormy elements they wrought and fought amongst, and Frisco was their harbour of rest for the time being. They had all blown into the City of the Golden Gate by trails unknown to each other, some by land, some by sea, and had met again in that old rendezvous of theirs by what men call the laws of chance, though it is very doubtful if any man, any woman does one single thing in this life that is not the outcome of some plan designed by higher laws and forces, for we are all like horses that are broken to the bit and bridle, and are all ridden or driven along the lanes or up the hills of life, the only thing that we have to do with it is to choose our unseen riders or drivers. We have that choice, it is our own fault if we by our own acts, thoughts, and desires attract the wrong kind of riders or drivers. They were hard drinkers that bunch of trail blazers, but they did not drink for the mere sake of soaking in the liquor, for them the filling and emptying of glasses was part of the ceremony of good fellowship which springs out of

acquaintanceship with either hard toil or the ever-war-ring elements of danger; not one of them was a soaker, their eyes were too bright, their lips too firmly clenched, the features of their faces too hardly set for men who allowed their appetites to master their lives.

Each had a tale to tell concerning deeds done since the last time they had forgathered on the shores of that, the loveliest bay in all the wide, wide world, the glorious key of the golden gate to the Pacific. Very soon they were travelling along the paths that reminiscence opens up, and first one, and then the other, spoke of the doings of the last year or two, until the old scout and hunter, who was always elected chairman of such gatherings by unspoken consent, turning his eye upon the man McGlusky, remarked:

"Well you raw-boned trouble seeker, what have you been doing for the last year or two? You slipped away, as mostly you do slip from company, quietly and without notice."

Jamie McGlusky, thus pointedly addressed, smiled a slow grim smile that was characteristic of him ere he answered, saying:

"Boys, the last thing I did in Frisco was to go out on a barge to watch a fight with almost skin gloves between Jim Corbett, an Irish-American lad, and a Jew youth named Jo Choyinski. It was a dashed good fight too, well worth watching, but I had my good money on the wrong laddie that time. As I had been induced by a Jew whom I had done a lot of business with at one time or another to back Choyinski, I lost my money. I'm not so sure," he added with a grin, "that I shouldn't have lost my shirt if I could have found anyone willing to wager against such a garment. But I lost and lost fairly and squarely, for the Irish-Californian was too clever for the champion of the Israelites, and when I got off the tug that brought us back from the fight I stood on the waterfront with not so much as a nickle in my clothes.

Looking around me for a job I ran into the skipper of an island trading schooner who was short of a hand. I had met him before, and although I was not over much in love with the buckie, still, spiders who have spun their threads and haven't any more to spin, can't be choosers, so I took the job he offered me, and I've been knocking round the islands ever since, first on one craft, then on another."

"What part of the islands?" demanded one of the group who was known as Red Mooney because he had a great beard, and a shock of hair the colour of a red moon seen in the Pacific when storms are brewing.

"What part," laughed McGlusky, "I wasn't anywhere near your old beat, Red Mooney. You always traded in the vicinity of the Solomons and Vacation Islands. I've been farther afield. I went up towards Alaska, working from one uncharted island to another in order to pick up information."

"In the name of Mike," responded Red Mooney, "what could you be looking after in such an ungodly part of the world as that, McGlusky? There's mighty little up that way, barring seals, and the seals are looked after too closely by Japanese gunboats to make it healthy to go interfering with them. Bad cess be to them same Japs with their gunboats."

"There's big money in sealing up that way," responded McGlusky, "and a man must expect to put up with something in this life if he intends to make big money." Then, looking round him with a whimsical expression upon his hard-bitten face, he added: "There isn't one of us who hasn't taken a long chance for the sake of a quick rise, it's the spice of life, the danger that goes with lumps of money. Most of you," he continued, "remember old man McPherson, who owned a schooner and was one of the hardest citizens to be found amongst the islands, he was British born but raised in America."

A chorus of remarks, some of which were not too complimentary to Skipper McPherson, broke from the lips of the men around the table whom McGlusky had addressed.

"Did you," demanded one of them, "sail with that cantankerous old cuss? I should have thought that you knew him too well to ship with him, Mac."

"W-e-e-l," came the slowly drawled reply. "As you say, I did know McPherson verra well, what I had known of him did not make me look for a saft passage. I knew he was about one of the hardest deils in the world, and by the same token one of the gamest that ever came from a wumman."

"He was game all right," responded a youngish-looking individual who sat facing Mac, "there wasn't anything between Hell and Afghanistan that McPherson wouldn't tackle if there were twa bawbees in the offing."

"You're right there, my lad," replied Mac, "and if a man's game I'll forgive him a Sunday suit full o' the ither faults. I've seen him run that bald head of his into places so full of deadly danger that most men would have been scared out of a couple of years growth to look at. But he was the deil himself for driving men who worked for him, and ye all ken that whatever ither faults Jamie McGlusky may be endowed with by the Almighty, laziness is not one o' them. I love my work and aim to throw my back into it when there is a job to be done, but do what I would I could not satisfy that old deil McPherson; he cursed me an' he raised Cain with that tongue o' his till one day I turned on him and told him that if he gi'ed me much more o' it I'd heave him to the sharks. Weel, we had a wee bitty row after that, and we were no on speaking terms for a month or two, and ye ken full weel that when the second mate and the skipper o' so small a craft as a barquentine are on bad terms, things air about as happy

as a hame where a man is married tae a wumman who is so darned tidy that he can't even brush his own whiskers wi' aut shoutin' fer help. So being of a forgiving nature, the first time we pulled into a good-sized port, I happened to remember that it was McPherson's birthday, ye see I had known him verra weel in former times, and he had given me a good deal o' his history, so I remembered his birthday, and going ashore wi' my pockets well lined, I struck a fancy goods shop, and the first thing I saw staring me in the face was a handsome case made o' mahogany containing a pair o' hair brushes that were silver backed, and so, saft like, as I had a few glasses o' Hieland whusky under ma belt, I thought to myself, Jamie McGlusky here is the way for you to make peace wi' Skipper McPherson, take your long legs into the shop and buy that wee bit box, and I did, and tucking it under my arm I went from ane boozing den to anither and got quite as much liquor as I could carry wi' safety in that corner o' the world, where a sailor mon wi' his pockets well lined may very easily come against the sharp edge, or the point o' a knife for the sake o' the siller he has worked so hard for. I took myself on board at last, and going straight to old man McPherson's wee bit cabin, which he persisted in calling his state room, I opened ma box and said:

" 'Skipper McPherson, here's buryin' all hard feelin's an' here's wishing you many happy returns o' your birthday, and here's a wee bitty present from Jamie McGlusky for you to remember me by.'

" He sat glaring at me dazed like for quite a wee while as if he could not understand any mon making him a present. Then he rose and, hitching his breeks up with both hands, you will remember it was a little trick of his to give a double hitch to his breeks just when he was troubled or meant mischief, and pushing out both his big, hairy hands to me and gripping mine, he said:

“ ‘ I’m thanking you kindly, McGlusky, for the thought. No one has ever remembered that birthday o’ mine since I was a wee bit o’ a laddie, and my fayther, who lived in Glasgow, remembered my birthday and gave me the deil’s own licking as a present so that I might remember that I had a fayther during the coming year. Such a good licking did the old boy gie me, and so weel did I remember it that I took me oath that I shouldn’t be hame to receive anither birthday present from him, and I ran away to America, and from that day to this I’ve never set eyes on my Daddie, an’ never will, for he must have been under the soil many a long year past, still McGlusky, I’m thanking ye.’

“ I went up on deck after that speech and was haeing a word wi’ the boatswain concerning a demijohn of rum that I had won from him in a wager, when up came old man McPherson, roaring and spitting like a bag full o’ wild cats. In his hands he held my birthday gift, and he glowered at me as if I were something that he would rather see than smell. He had left his cap below, and his bald head shone in the sun like a stripped coconut. After letting his jaws waggle soundlessly with rage, he yelled at me:

“ ‘ Ye think ye can dare tae be funny at my expense, ye long-legged spawn o’ a mither that must hae been a mule; ye’ve lashings o’ hair on the outside o’ your ain head, but the deil only kens what ye hae inside it, except water and damned impudence.’ And as he uttered that encouraging remark he flung my gift fair in ma face and stamped away tae his cabin, and when the boatswain and the crew saw what I had given the skipper on his birthday, they danced around grinning, and the boatswain said:

“ ‘ By the back hair o’ Judy McGuinness, McGlusky, it’s a pretty taste in humour ye’ve got, I don’t wunner the old man flung your gift in your face, with that kindly speech attached to it. I only wonder that he did

not pull a gun on you, for that bald head o' his is the sorest spot in his sinful old soul.'"

The crowd around the table grinned as they listened to McGlusky's reminiscences, and then Water-front Jo remarked: :

"You made a miss cue that time, old bird! "

"Aye," drawled McGlusky, "but I learnt something. I learnt that it's no the depths o' diplomacy to gie a set o' silver backed hair brushes and combs to a mon as bald as a blister, on his birthday, not if ye are expecting him to remember you in his will—he's more likely to remember you in his language." At the conclusion of his short but fruitful remark, McGlusky having refreshed his inner man with some more liquor, was just filling his pipe when one of the crowd remarked:

"You were mate aboard McPherson's craft, McGlusky. What made the old man part with Sandy Jackson, who was mate on his old tub for seven years to my knowledge, to make room for you?"

"W-e-e-l," drawled McGlusky. "The old man told me that Sandy Jackson had thrown him down badly at the finish, McPherson said that Sandy had grand gifts but no guts, and had shirked his job when he had a great chance to loot ten thousand dollars worth of pearls from a Jap schooner, by simply sinking the pagan who was pearling in forbidden waters."

"If half what I have heard concerning the doings o' old man McPherson be true," said Ben McMulti, who, like McGlusky, had done pretty nearly everything both ashore and afloat during his lifetime, "I don't think the old buckeroo would hesitate to sink a Jap craft if he could get away wi' a thousand dollars worth o' pearls or high class pearl shells, let alone ten thousand, for there has long been a blood feud between old man McPherson and the Japs. It started years ago when McPherson went on sealing trips up along the coast of Alaska and was making a pile hand over fist out of seal

furs. He had got away with his schooner loaded to the gunwales with seal pelts on half a dozen occasions and had struck no trouble with the Japanese.

"After a while he bought a real good, full-rigged barque out of the dollars he had made from sealing, and he had as good a crew aboard that barque of his as you would come across anywhere between Hades and the Andes. He made a straight bee line for the Jap sealing grounds that he now considered his own especial property, because he had been the first white man to go after pelts there. He had made a whole heap of dollars when he only had a fair-sized crew and craft to work with, and now that he had a full-rigged barque and a large, tough crew, he reckoned he would make money enough to bust the bank, and he would have done it, too, for although the old bald head is about as big a rough neck as any man might wish to sail with, he is a deep thinker, and no man in God's world can get into action much quicker than he can when he's out for action. He did wonderfully well that first trip with his barque, far better than he had ever done before, and he had a perfect gold mine under hatches in the shape of prime seal pelts; and he felt at peace with man, God and wumman as he turned the nose of his barque towards Frisco, for this city was his main depot. He had a fair wind behind him, and the crew were in good heart, for he had agreed to pay them not only very good wages but also a bonus from profits made on the voyage.

"Everything was as merry as a singing party at a nigger weddin' for the better part of a week, when one day the look-out man at the mast-head bawled out that there was a gunboat bearing down on the starboard side. The old man was below, conning a chart of the waters through which he was sailing when the mate dived down from the deck and gave him the information that had come from the look-out man up aloft.

" 'Well,' replied Mac to the rather excited man. 'What about it? A harlot's blessing on the Japs, I dinna like them, and a harlot's blessing is about the worst kind of a curse that a mon can throw at any one or anything.'

" 'They look as if they were going to have some kind of a game with us, Skipp'r,' the mate replied.

" Old man McPherson noticed the anxiety in the voice of his mate, and snapped out some of his own especial brand of language, which as most of you know is hot enough to make the pitch bubble in the seams of a ship's deck, even in a snowstorm, and then quitting his cursing, he snarled:

" 'I'd like to see the blame brown skipper that would train a gun on our flag. I don't think the old bird had ever been naturalized, but to him the American flag under which he had been raised represented the law and the gospels.'

" 'I don't think,' replied the mate, 'that the Japs will care a curse what kind of a flag a craft is flying if they suspect it is loaded to the gunwales with sealskins.'

" 'Why shouldn't we carry seal pelts?' almost yelled McPherson. 'We've got them aboard, haven't we, an' stowed away safely under hatches, and who in the name o' jumping Sarah is to know where we got them?'

" 'Well,' answered the mate, 'we know that we got them from part of the territory that the Japs claim because they planted their flag there some years ago, and they call that coast-line theirs; it's like their damned cheek, but there it is.'

" 'To Heck and beyond with what they claim, away with ye Mr. Mate and run up the Stars and Stripes from the main truck and we'll see what the brown blighters have to say to that.'

" In the twinkling of a sheepdog's tail the American flag was flying from the truck of McPherson's barque, but it had hardly straightened in the breeze ere the

sound of a gun reached the ears of the crew of McPherson's barque, and that sound was followed by a shell that came zipping right across the barque's bows. McPherson did a wild war dance, and picking up his speaking trumpet he shouted language which would have thawed an iceberg at the Jap gunboat that was now coming on at a racing pace. Old man McPherson knew well enough that the Japs could not hear a word that he was saying, but it eased his feelings to let loose some of his pent up vocabulary, but for all that he didn't heave to as the Japs had expected he would do when they had fired a shot across his bows, which is the signal to haul down your canvas and lay to as everybody knows.

"The Japanese soon proved that they were bent on business, and were not merely bluffing, for they sent another shell across so close to the barque's mainmast that the wonder was it did not carry away the paint. The crew of the gunboat could now be seen standing at their posts, and there was an air of workmanlike intentness about their actions that warned the crew of the barque that hard boiled trouble was coming to them. But you all know what a pig-headed old son of a gun McPherson is; he wouldn't have hauled in any of his canvas at that moment if the whole Japanese navy had been firing at him. He just did a whirl on his own deck and spat out curses until another shell from the gunboat burst into his barque's mainmast and brought it down with all its dunnage a tangled mass across the deck and over the side. Three of the crew were hit by falling spars and sailing gear and old man McPherson had a gash across his forehead caused by a splinter from a shell that would have put most men half his age out of action. But a tougher old sea shark never trod a vessel's decks than that old walrus; he was one of those chaps who fight the harder the more they are hurt, but he had a lot inside that bald head of his

if he had mighty little on the outside, and he knew that those Japs would blow him and his barque out of the water if he gave them half an excuse to do so, after they had once smelt gun cotton.

"So he just contented himself with yelling out promises of what they would get if the smoke of a Yankee cruiser appeared above the horizon. A mighty lot of notice the brown men took of him or his threats; they knew that they had caught him with the goods on him, for it turned out later that they had had spies on his trail ever since his barque had appeared in those waters, and they knew, almost as well as he did how many prime pelts he had stowed between decks, and they had been hanging on his trail like a fallen sister hangs on to a deep sea sailor just ashore with a year's pay in his pockets, and no daughter o' the night could have been more determined to make a clean up than those Japs were. They ran their wicked-looking gunboat close enough to the barque for the officer in charge to make his voice heard distinctly aboard the barque, and then the officer in command made his meaning mighty plain. He did not care a ruby-coloured peony about international law, and said so, and also made it plain that Japan would not crawl down, or kowtow to Uncle Samuel. Not only had they caught old man McPherson with the goods on him, but they had caught him near enough to coastal waters for Japan to claim he was a poacher, the spot being under Japanese ownership or control. Old man McPherson knew that he was between the devil and the doorstep of a prison, and began to bite his whiskers off on the inside and spit 'em at the gunboat commander, who took no more notice of him than he would have taken of a toy terrier snapping at its own tail.

"The Jap officers are thoroughly efficient, and hold the opinion that they are as good, if not better than, any officers of any of the white nations of the world, and

though I claim to be 100% American, and have spent the best part of a lifetime in this part of the world both on land and on water, I don't feel too cocksure that the Jap officers are very far out in their calculations concerning their own capacity for keeping their end up under any kind of circumstances. They have a heck of a conceit of themselves, but they have done things which entitle them to carry their tails high; they are the new force in the universe and they know it, and mean the white world to know it.

"That Jap gunboat officer snapped his words out like shots coming from a gattling gun, and he told old man McPherson that if he showed fight, he'd come aboard him armed to the teeth, and make angels of him and his crew, and then tow the barque to the nearest Japanese port and confiscate her, and her illicit cargo, so old McPherson looked about as cheerful as a picture advertisement for somebody's bellyaching pills and did not burst into prayer. The Japs sent an officer and a prize crew aboard the barque and gave the white crew the choice of three things. They could go below in a bunch and remain below until they were sent ashore to a Jap prison, or they could start a fight and see how they liked it right under the guns of the gunboat; or they could turn to and trim the barque and clean up the mess the gun practice had made, and work the barque to port under the orders of the Jap officer, whilst the gunboat acted as a convoy.

"I've heard white sailors cuss in a manner that was picturesque and full flavoured and free at various periods," commented the narrator, "but by the shoe strings of Jumping Susan, I've never heard such pen portraits painted in words as the crew of that barque produced without rehearsing, for the idea of Yankee sailormen being driven like dogs by a Jap officer was as gall and wormwood made into a fancy cocktail for them to drink. If there had been a dog's chance in a

fight for them they would have jumped into it without any band playing; but they knew that the quick-firing guns on the gunboat would sweep their decks with less excuse than a film star needs to make her cuddle down on a millionaire's lap when the lights are burning low. So they turned to and whipped away the broken spars and cordage and trimmed the barque, and made her ship-shape until she was able to move under the stump of a mainmast and what sails could be rigged in a hurry, and old man McPherson had to turn to like any common hand, and the things he whispered when a Jap officer, who stood five feet nothing, prodded him in the stern with the muzzle of a six gun might have set his whiskers on fire, his shellbacks would not have been surprised if the old pirate had swung round and strangled that little brown officer, but McPherson put into practise one of his many quaint proverbs, which ran: 'Never burn your bridges until ye've bought, borrowed, or looted a boat,' and although his eyes grew bloodshot he stuck it out.

"They ran the barque into a Japanese port and made very short work of what they termed the trial of the captive crew, the barque was confiscated and all the seal pelts that were found upon her, and the men were imprisoned for a term of six months for seal poaching. Old man McPherson was sentenced to two years for his share in that enterprise, but he never served more than a few months of his term, for the old sea dog was a master of subterfuge and he shammed ill with such success that he was put to do light work in a kind of outdoor prison which consisted mainly of a Jap officers' quarters and a large garden attached. After a little while the old man apparently brooded so dreadfully over his humiliation and the loss of his vessel, which constituted the whole of his worldly possessions, that he seemed to go soft in the brain, and he was allowed to roam very much at his own pleasure, doing an occa-

sional soft job in the garden when the spirit moved him to do anything at all. That so-called jail was close to a port that was frequented by ships of all nationalities, and old man McPherson spent a good deal of his time gazing down upon the shipping in the adjacent harbour, and planning all kinds of wild schemes by which he might escape.

"One day Fate dealt him a full hand of trumps, he was mooning round the garden and noticed that his jailer, a retired Japanese naval officer, was on his hands and knees looking down a well from which water was drawn for gardening purposes. McPherson always claimed afterwards that he had acted solely upon the spur and impulse of the moment. He said the impulse on which he acted came from God; I dunnow where the Japs thought it came from, for seeing the Jap leaning upon the heels of his hands, and putting his head down the well, he sprang forward and kicked the recumbent figure of the Jap, and for a man of his age, McPherson was not lacking in vigorous movement. The toe of his boot landed fair on the Jap officer's bulwarks, and the next the world saw of him was his heels in the air and his head diving straight down that well.

"When he was telling me the story," exclaimed the narrator, "I asked him if the fall had broken the Japanese officer's neck, and he replied in that dry, whimsical fashion of his, saying:

" 'I'm a lover o' the truth, ma laddie, an' I canna say truly whether the Jap officer broke his neck, or whether he was able to right himself so as to paddle in the well water long enough for his cries to be heard, and to bring about a rescue; because I didna stop to investigate the matter. My business lay in the port below, and it didna take me long to set aboot attending to it.' I made ma way doon through the gardens and the foliage that gave me plenty of cover, until I got right doon to the port, and then I mingled wi' the stream o'

people that were attending to their business there, and I climbed aboard a ship that was just making her way out of port and hid below amongst her cargo, and I've never troubled Japan wi' ma presence from that day to this, nor by the grace o' God will I ever do so.'

"That," continued the narrator, "was the whole of the story as I got it from McPherson himself, and it fully accounted for the bitter hatred the old man had of anything that had even a savour or a suspicion of the Land of the Chrysanthemums about it."

When the story had ended, a vigorous ripple of conversation ran around the table and a good many reminiscences concerning the Japanese people and their habits were forthcoming. At last one of them, turning to a young man who had listened to the story of McPherson's adventures, with many grins and quiet chuckles, said:

"Say, Jack, I guess it won't be very long before we'll be seeing that yarn you've just heard between the covers o' one of your books."

The young fellow grinned good-naturedly and replied:

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if I did write it up some day." At that McGlusky, pricking up his ears, leant forward and, gazing at the young man ardently, flung a query at him:

"Dae ye mean to tell me," he said, "that ye have written books?" The man interrogated smiled in a good-humoured kind of fashion and answered off-handedly:

"Yes, I've written well over a dozen books of sorts, mostly the yarns I have put together out of tales I have heard round camp fires and between decks, and at just such festive gatherings as this one."

"I didna quite catch your name," cried McGlusky. "Would ye mind telling me what ye're called?" Before the man could reply, Waterfront Jo chipped in, saying:

"This boy is Jack London. I should have thought, McGlusky, that such a reader as you always were would have caught on to the name as soon as you heard it mentioned."

"Weel," drawled Mac, "to tell ye the truth, I didna hear the laddie's name at all, or I should have brought myself to his attention more directly than I hae done. I've read many o' the works o' Jack London, and ye'll travel far before ye'll find a mon who can truthfully call himself a greater admirer o' his writin's than Jamie McGlusky, but," he continued, "ye astonish me, laddie, an' I hope you and these deils here are no pulling ma leg, I ken weel that leg pulling is a favourite pastime o' this bunch o' two-legged sea horses."

Instantly a chorus of denials broke from the men around the table, who emphatically swore that the guest was none other than the young man who had already made a niche for himself in American literature, and was fast becoming a world known literary personage. It was Jack London himself who put an end to the conversation concerning himself by saying:

"Cut out the cackle, let's wrestle with some more drinks, I'm as dry as sun-baked wash leather after all the talk."

So once again the drinks began to circulate with a rapidity that was common amongst the hard-drinking wayfarers of that time in those rough and ready days, till one by one the company drifted away on pleasure bent, each after the manner of his kind, until at last the only people left at the table were Jamie McGlusky and the great Jack London.

"I'd no like to be personal, Jack," exclaimed McGlusky, "but ye are the first writing genius that I have ever had the good fortune to run against."

"Well," answered the writer, "I hope the sample has come up to your expectations, Mac?"

"Weel," retorted McGlusky, "ye do and ye dinna,

ye are mair man an' less genius than I had expected, to see."

"Oh, I'm common clay all right," responded London with a grin, "the general run o' writers call me a rough-neck because I go out off the beaten trails to find the material for my stories."

"Commonplace writers air like commonplace talkers, a dommed sight mair plentiful than popular, they are like the locusts that live only to eat, and eat only to destroy, and they're missed mair than they're mourned when they perish. Ye hae the stuff o' genius in ye ma laddie, it sticks out all over your works."

"What is genius, McGlusky?" smiled Jack London. "If it is the capacity to go to bed hungry, and get up feeling like a famine in trousers, then I'm it all right."

"Genius, ma son, is the gift o' saying, or writing, the things that will stick in the minds o' men for all time, like a burr to a blanket."

"What kind of things, Mac?"

For a moment the corrugated brow of the hard-bitten adventurer knitted itself in folds, then leaning forward over the table, he said stridently:

"Things like this, Jack boy: 'I would rather steal than beg, but I would sooner starve than steal.'"

The big fellow paused whilst London gazed at him in astonishment, and then added, "or things o' this kind, Jack. 'Nay amount o' press bluffing prostitution can transform a third-class newspaper hack into a literary genius though it is tried every day—at a price.' That's the sort o' thing I'm meaning ma son," commented McGlusky, "or maybe something after this fashion. 'Behind every man who has made a niche for himself in the halls o' fame, stands the shade o' some wumman, either mother, wife, or soul sister, and her shadow has often been greater in reality than his substance.'"

"Say, McGlusky," cried Jack London, "why don't

you write books yourself, man? With the things that bubble out o' you like water out o' a spring you could coin the gold dollars."

"Nay, nay ye daft young deil, it's ma part in life to live books, not to write 'em"; he paused and said, a moment later, with something akin to a blush rising under the tan on his rocky face: "The ainly thing I care to write is—" he paused, and stammering, added, "is poetry."

If someone had dropped a plug of dynamite near Jack London he would not have been more surprised than he was when that confession fell from the lips of this adventurer who looked as if he could have thrown a steer without the aid of a rope. "Poetry—" he began—"poetry—— You, McGlusky, a poet? I would rather have taken you for a pirate."

"The deil bite ye ma laddie," chirruped Mac, "ye shouldna judge a book by its binding, for the contents and the cover are often verra, verra much in opposition to yin anither."

Suddenly it dawned upon the acute intelligence of the novelist that this raw-boned mass of mental contradictions might prove to be a character that would do to adorn the pages of one of his novels, as a real and unquestioned original genius. So with just the suspicion of the quirk of a smile around his mobile lips, the man whose name was to ring around the whole world as the writer of high class romances, said:

"If you think your health will stand the shock, Mac, repeat some of your poetry, and I'll give you my unbiased opinion upon its merits, for although I only write prose myself, I've made a deep and peculiar study of poets, ancient and modern, and I love the stuff, and only wish that I could write it myself, but if I can't write it, I honestly believe that neither can half the incompetent men who pose as poetic critics on the great journals of the world."

For a moment or two the map whose name was known in every rough and ready camp, not only in the islands of the South Seas but over most of the mining fields of Australia, and in the hinterlands of Asia, sat blushing like a school kiddy, and fumbling with his fingers and thumbs, as shamefaced as though he were about to confess to a crime that would smirch his manhood, and then having fortified himself with a deep sinker that Waterfront Jo had brought to his side, he placed his elbows upon the table, and cupping his chin in his two mighty palms he began to open his heart to the writer, who was sizing him up as a great surgeon eyes a prospective patient upon whom he intends to perform an exacting operation, for there was nothing on God's earth that Jack London loved better than picking his characters from real life, and that is why his stories live, and will live when nine-tenths of the high-brow writing that has been boomed all the world over has passed into the limbo of forgotten things.

McGlusky soon proved that he had one great quality, that was, a reading or speaking voice that he could modulate at will in response to the emotions that passed through his brain. It was the story in verse of the ride of a noted Australian bushman called Bill Delaney, who had ridden through a terrible bush fire to save the life of a squatter's daughter whom he loved, that McGlusky was reciting. On and on went the voice telling the tale of dauntless heroism for love's sweet sake, a story as old as the tale of Lochinvar, only in a different setting, and when the story was finished Jack London started up and said:

"That's a dashed long way better than plenty of stuff that I've seen in print under so-called great names in America and England. Let's see, Mac, what did you call it, 'The Ride of Bill Delaney'?"

"Yes," came the answer from the tremulous lips of

the big man, who was, deep in his soul, fearful that London might be ridiculing his poem.

"I'll be asking ye one thing, Jack, and that is to play the mon wi' me and no to be filling me up with saft stuff to feed ma vanity, for I'm feared I've mair than my fair share o' that quality in ma make up noo."

"I'm not built that way, Old Timer, we'll fill up and have another drink, and you can give me a further sample of your work."

This was quite sufficient to bring Waterfront Jo across from his place behind the bar, and drinks were soon served, and when libations to the Gods of poetry had been drained, London made himself comfortable in his seat and prepared to listen, whilst McGlusky, changing his attitude, laid himself well back in his chair, clasped his hands in his lap, and turning his face towards the ceiling, closed his eyes and began to recite from memory. Some of the poems that he poured out in his deep voice were up to, or well over the average, and London's keenly interested face beamed. Some of it was not so good, and at last he started off on a poem of enormous length, and as the theme the home-brewed poet had chosen for himself was a biblical one, *viz.*, "The Courtship of Ruth," London soon lost all interest, and indicated this to his entertainer by moving his feet and shuffling his glass about freely on the table, but Mac had now started off on a theme dear to his soul, and keeping his eyes firmly closed, he went on and on and on, until London, looking surreptitiously at Waterfront Jo, gave him a wink, and by pantomimic gestures indicated to that astute individual that he, Jack London, intended to make his escape. Rising soundlessly, he slipped across the floor, his feet soft shod with silence and swinging the half-glass door open very gently, he waved a fond farewell to the bar tender and bolted.

Still unaware of this pantomime, Mac went on

reciting his poem with the greatest gusto imaginable, for never before in his hard-bitten life had he run across a man, whom he imagined was such a wonderful listener. After he had continued for quite a while to the silent amusement of Waterfront Jo, McGlusky happened to open his eyes, and looking across the table saw that London's chair was vacant, and when his eyes looked round the bar he found that he had not even a solitary listener, for Waterfront Jo was, to all seeming, fast asleep with his head on his folded arms on the bar. For an instant Mac's face flushed crimson, and then a bitter frown appeared upon his brow, and sulphurous language came gritting from between his teeth. But in a moment he pulled himself together and a grin broke out over his weather-worn countenance and illuminated his cast-iron features.

"A'weel," he muttered shamefacedly, "I've been blithering poetry by the hour, sma' wunner yon laddie London picked up his feet and skipped oot. I'd ha' done the same mysel'."

Then, his eyes resting on the form of Waterfront Jo, he brought one of his big fists down on the table with a resounding bang that made all the glasses upon it jump, and he shouted:

"Hey you, Jo, bring on the red liquor, na mair o' your fancy cocktails that makes a mon mak' twa ends an' the middle o' a fool o' himsel'. Eff I ha' any mair o' that stuff I'll be talkin' about ma rich relations, an' it would puzzle the deil himsel' tae show me where I could find yin, either on top or below the soil."

CHAPTER II

THE COMING OF JUDY HISCOX

THAT night, strolling from one saloon bar to another where men of the adventurous type were in the habit of forgathering, McGlusky went light of heart and keen of purpose for the conversation he had had that day with his old cronies and the story told by Ben McMulti concerning the adventures of old man McPherson in the sealing waters of the Japanese had awakened once again a long cherished plan. There were not many things that McGlusky had not been in the course of his hectic career. He had been a sandalwood trader; a pearl fisher, a copra trader, and many other professions or callings had claimed him as a devotee; many a time and oft he had heard tales of wealth to be won from the grounds that the Japanese had claimed on the extreme edge of Alaskan territory. From all he had been able to gather there was a mint of money sticking out for any man who had the courage, adresse and enterprise to go seal poaching in that far out of the way part of the world. He had pondered over that question very deeply in times past, and more than once he had tried to raise the money to get an outfit sufficiently powerful to enable him to risk adventuring in the waters over which the Japanese had, on the very slightest and flimsiest pretensions, claimed dominion. After hearing McMulti's story he had pondered the matter over and had come to the conclusion that if he could arrange an outfit he would run the risks that old McPherson had run so unsuccessfully. For like many

another man who had worked in those latitudes, McGlusky questioned the sole right of the brown man to those sealing grounds.

Musing over this matter as he strolled through the streets of San Francisco, Mac arrived at the conclusion that McPherson, in spite of his New England upbringing, had blundered on the side of too little precaution when securing his seals, and he promised himself that if he could get a vessel of sufficient tonnage, and the kind of crew that would gladden his own heart, then he would go foraging in that Eldorado which the brown men had grabbed and earmarked as their own.

"The Japs are verra cute and wide awake, I'm no unaware o' that fact, but I'm thinking that Jamie McGlusky can get up as early in the morning with his eyes as wide open as any brown man that ever lived by his wits."

This was no idle boast, even though the man made it to his own soul, for he had done so many things, and in the main done them successfully that his name had become a byword for brain, brawn and soul-thrilling courage in a part of the world where such qualities were not at all uncommon, and were considered the only qualities that mattered in a man's make up. As McGlusky sat in one saloon bar in the centre of Kerney Street waiting to see whether any of his own particular cronies would put in an appearance, he was pondering deeply over this new matter that had taken such a grip on his adventure-loving soul. To Mac came Harry Maynard, the landlord of the saloon. A light-hearted jovial fellow was this same Harry Maynard, a man just past his best days as an athlete, a fellow with a fine crop of jet-black curly hair and a merry, devil-may-care, laughing countenance. He was by way of being one of the most popular men on the Pacific slope at that period as he was a wondrously able athlete, or perhaps it is

more correct to say he had been one. All along the shelves at the back of his bar, amidst bottles, stood gleaming silver cups and other trophies which he had won against the best athletes of the world, and as he was a great raconteur as well as a great performer, his company was sought eagerly by men of all kinds and cults and his saloon was the rendezvous of sporting men and sporting women also. As Maynard caught sight of McGlusky's herculean figure sitting in solitary state with a glass in his hand, Maynard, who was a keen lover of a man of parts himself, strolled light-footedly over to where Mac was sitting, and clapping him on the back, exclaimed:

"Waiting for anyone in particular to-night, Mac, or just here on the off chance?"

"I am here, Harry, as you put it, on the off chance, but it will be strange if some of the boys I want to run into don't come to your saloon between now and closing time," was McGlusky's hearty rejoinder. The two men, who knew each other well, dropped immediately into the conversational strain that is typical of men of their type, and in the course of their chat McGlusky mentioned the meeting he had had that afternoon with some half dozen well-known adventurers, and incidentally he mentioned Jack London, and not being devoid of a sense of humour himself Mac opened out and told of his lapse into poetry and Jack London's droll way of escaping from him. There was a certain amount of canny caution in McGlusky's telling of that tale to such a general raconteur as Harry Maynard was, because he knew that sooner or later the story would get round, and he thought it wiser that he should turn the laugh upon himself than leave it to others to do that for him. Harry Maynard grinned heartily over the story and then drifted off to the sealing adventures of old McPherson.

"It's a funny thing," he said, "that Ben McMulti

should have brought that matter up because, as a matter of fact I had quite a nice little packet of dollars in that venture myself, as I was one of those who had backed old man McPherson, and a jolly good man to back he was," added the champion sportsman, "only he ran into a streak of bad luck and that is liable to happen to any man in God's green world if he's playing his string out. I wouldn't mind putting a little hard coin into just such another adventure if the right man came along to see it through."

"Weel—weel—weel, man alive, you're the voice of Providence in trousers, and the thing ye've just breathed into my ear makes my blood run warm again."

"Why?" exclaimed Maynard, with a chuckle deep down in his throat, "why?"

"Because," exploded McGlusky, "the reason I'm waiting here to-night is that I'm hoping to run against someone who can put me in touch with a monied plunger who would like to take on just such an adventure."

"Are you meaning," demanded Harry Maynard, "that you yourself, McGlusky, would like to engineer a raid upon the Japanese sealing grounds?"

"I'm meaning just that my lad, and your words fell on my ears like harmonies frae heaven, for it's a good, game, gambling backer that I'm needing, and weel I know that there isn't a gamer backer in this part o' the world than Harry Maynard. You're no the sort, Harry that throws a main and then squalls like a fish wife if it's no a winning throw."

"The next best pleasure in this old world, McGlusky," exclaimed the athlete, "to winning is losing, a man should never gamble who can't get a thrill from both ends of the game."

"That," cooed McGlusky, "is ma ain philosophy, Maynard, laddie, but I've met lashings o' men who

could only get a thrill out of winning, and a squall out of losing."

"Have you any man in your mind in particular, McGlusky; I mean any man with money and grit, and guts enough to back a good sporting chance?"

"I'm no knowing one, just at present here in Frisco, as it happens all the men with whom I'm acquainted who have money, are either in England or out at sea. But however that may be, some of the boys know I'm a plunger and maybe will bring me and the buckies together, that's why I'm here the night."

Suddenly Harry Maynard, pushing his hands into the pockets of his beautifully fitting pants, rocked backwards and forwards from toe to heel and from heel to toe. His face wrinkled all up with silent laughter and his eyes fairly jumping in his head, caused Mac to exclaim rather testily:

"What in the name o' all the saints in the calendar air ye turning your face into a circus advertisement for?"

"Didn't know I was doing just that to my face," laughed Maynard, who was one of those men whose temper little short of an earthquake could ruffle. "I was thinking that I might have the very person you're seeking, McGlusky, in this bar within the course of the next half hour, because I got a note this morning from a woman who is just as full of money as a mamilute dog is of devilment, and if you can show me a better or a gamer plunger than she is, why I'd like to meet that party, I sure would."

"A wumman?" almost growled McGlusky in his astonishment. "Did I hear ye aright when ye say a wumman who would gamble big stakes in such an adventure as that I have been talking about?"

"I said a woman, and I meant a woman, and when I've told you the way she's bred, why, you'll not wonder at anything about her, and you won't fear as to her being

willing to take a hand in anything from cock fighting to using a six gun."

Astonishment was written all over the granite face of McGlusky. Gazing fixedly into the face of Harry Maynard, he growled:

"To tell ye the truth, Maynard, I'm no over keen in having a wumman body mixed up in such a venture as the one I'm proposin' to ye, ye ken there will be nae nicety about it from first to last, nae squeamishness anywhere on either side o' the play."

"You won't find anything squeamish about Judy Hiscox, I assure you of that," smiled Maynard.

"Maybe no, but a' the same I'd rather hae dealings wi' a mon body if ye can find me one ready to put up money for the venture. Mind ye, Maynard, I'm nay hinting the least thing disrespectful towards your woman friend. My ain religion is to try and see something good in all wummen; at their best they are gems o' human kind, at their worst they are no fit for a dog to bury beside a bone."

"I quite agree with your diagnosis of feminine human nature," smiled the ex-champion athlete, "but listen whilst I tell you how the lady whom I am expecting here to-night is bred. When," he added, "you know who her father and mother were and what her upbringing was, I think you will brush most of your scruples into the discard heap."

"Maybe I wull, and maybe I wull no," responded McGlusky, shaking his head like a bull which hears a stinging fly buzzing round its ears.

"Ever hear of Wild Bill Hiscox?" queried Maynard abruptly.

"Who hasn't heard of Wild Bill Hiscox?" rapped out McGlusky. "His name was a household word all along the western border for many a long year. I remember well how he died, he was shot from behind by a coward who would not have dared to have pulled a trigger

whilst looking into Wild Bill's eyes. His name was still a legend to conjure with anywhere along the western marches when I was but a boy, but what are ye aiming at by asking me if I knew the man or knew of him?"

"Well," drawled Maynard, who knew how to make his points possibly as well as any man that ever walked in two shoes, "now you tell me you know all there is to know about Wild Bill Hiscox, I'll ask you another one: 'did you happen to hear any stories about a woman known as Calamity Jane when you were knocking around the western borders, McGluskys?'"

"The man," grumbled Mac, "who tells ye that he has spent any time in the woolly west and hasna heard of Calamity Jane, may be written down as either a leear or he's too dumb to be allowed to walk out wi'out the assistance o' a wet nurse, for well known as Wild Bill Hiscox was, I think Calamity Jane had an even more reckless character. She was no one o' the dance hall women, though she often went to such places, not to look for a man, but to enjoy herself dancing wi' any mon body who took her fancy. She used to be the driver of a mail coach in the days when gold went down by coach, and the driver o' the six-horse team had to be a number one expert driver, and in addition to that he had to be almighty quick on the trigger with his belt guns, for it was a nasty little habit of the highwaymen to shoot the driver first and bail up the coach afterwards, and I'm telling you this, Maynard, that Calamity Jane could use her belt guns as well as any man upon the western front, not excluding Bat Masterson himself, and as you'll be knowing, Bat was one of the deadliest."

"Well," almost cooed Maynard, "when you say you knew all about Wild Bill Hiscox and as much as the next man about Calamity Jane, you may make a pretty good guess as to what sort of a woman Judy Hiscox is, for she was the daughter of Calamity Jane and her sire was Wild Bill."

A grunt of absolute astonishment broke from the lips of McGluskly, who was not very easily surprised, and he followed the grunt up by remarking:

"Ye've sprung a red-hot one on me to-night, Maynard. I've heard many a rumour o' a girl who was reported to be Calamity Jane's love child, but this is the first time I have ever got any details. Are ye sure o' your facts, Harry?"

"Yes, I am as sure of what I am telling you as I am that both my father and my mother were white folk; I am about the last man to repeat mere cackle upon such a subject. The woman who will be here any moment now, won't deny the truth of the story if you ask her concerning it when she knows you well enough to be on terms of intimacy with you. She herself has lived a life pretty nearly as wild in its way as did her mother, Calamity Jane. She was taken from the fields to be educated, but she was not very old before the wild blood that was her heritage from both her father and her mother asserted itself, and she made her way back to the borders of the woolly west, and took up a job at first as an accountant in one of the border hotels, and from then on she followed the fields, one way or another, living as straight as God makes 'em and shooting as straight as she lived, for she inherited the trigger finger of her father and her mother, and she is about as nerry and cool a piece of goods as you will find anywhere between earth, hell or the Andes."

"What sort of a wumman is she now?" queried McGluskly.

"Well, I don't enthuse much over women," smiled Harry Maynard, "but I would describe her as a high stepper, a woman who knows well how to take her own part, and keep her end up without calling in the assistance of any of her male friends; she's an almighty good business woman, let me tell you that. I know it because I have done business with her on several occa-

sions, and the man who is going to get ahead of Judy Hiscox has got to get up before the cranes have taken their heads from beneath their wings. As for what she looks like, well, she's a bit taller than the average woman, and walks with just a suggestive bit of mannishness about it which comes from doing a whole lot of work in the saddle, and also is it owing to the way she has marched with men on stampedes after new gold rushes; she's got a pair of eyes that know how to look a man straight in the face, and she possesses a mouth that, while it is not customary with her to use cuss words, I have heard a curse slip past her lips once or twice when she has been stirred to her depths, but a better-hearted woman never came from God Almighty's nursery; she has hair that she can sit on when she is in the saddle, and she feels like making a cushion of it. But mostly she wears it in plaits coiled round her head, and a better-shaped head you'd have to climb a tree to look over a crowd to find; as for her figure, why, well you can imagine it when you think of the kind of life she has led; she's strongly made and light of foot, and her hands are long and slender and shapely, and as strong as steel. There you are, Mac, that's the best I can do in the way of word painting, because I'm not good at describing women."

"Weel, Maynard, ye've no made such a bad job o' your word painting. I'm thinking from what ye tell me that the lassie may be verra, verra likeable, but is she easy to get along wi' or is she yin o' those masterful wummen who want every blame thing under the sun their own way?"

"No," answered Maynard, "she's got too much horse sense to want her own way all along the line; she is above and beyond all else a give and take woman. All she asks for is a square deal, and God help the man who tries to give her anything else."

"Now ye're talking," exclaimed Mac, with the first

inflection of pleasure in his voice that had been there, since the woman subject had cropped up.

"Dae ye think that the wumman would put the money up," continued Mac, "without wanting to take part in the expedition?"

"I'm afraid not, McGlusky, because I think myself that it is the lure of the adventure that will take her into a scheme like yours as much as the hope of making a profit. Though, mind you, she is as keen as a Yiddish money lender with regard to the business side of any contract that she makes. Judy Hiscox is nobody's fool, stick that and write it down on the tablets of your brain, McGlusky, but this I can guarantee, you'll never hear a whimper out of her if the dice fall the wrong way up after you and she have thrown."

Just as he had uttered the last words, the half-glass door of the saloon where the two men were sitting was forced open with a none too gentle impetus, and for about a second a woman stood framed in the opening made by the freely flung door.

"There she is now, McGlusky," murmured Maynard, "look at her yourself and do your own sizing up. I wash my hands of the job the moment I have introduced you."

Without more ado, the athlete slipped across the saloon with a step that was as light and as springy as the footwork of a boxer at the prime of his speed, and with outstretched hands he greeted a young woman who had just entered, and his greeting was voiced in terms and tones of the deepest respect. As his hand and the hand of the newcomer met, Maynard said:

"Good evening, Miss Judy, you have come in as usual just in the nick of time. I don't know how you do it, but it seems to me, looking back along the aisles that my memory traces, that on nearly every occasion that we have met you have arrived just when you were wanted."

"That's good hearing, Harry," came the ready reply in a well-modulated voice that had no mannishness in it, "I'd sure hate to butt in any old time I wasn't wanted."

Then Maynard, speaking in a voice so low that his tones could not reach the ears of McGlusky, told his visitor of the man sitting at the far table.

"That is Jamie McGlusky, the greatest dare devil this old world has seen for a century or two, and the straightest dealer I have met with in a life time. He's a bit of a crank and like someone else I know," added Maynard with a swift glance at the girlish face and a smile on his mouth, "he is rather fond of having his own way in all things."

"Not a bad trait, Mr. Maynard," smiled the young woman, "having your own way is one of the finest pastimes I know anything about—if you can get it. Sometimes," she added a moment later, "you have to pay such a thundering big price for your hobby, that having your own way is not as profitable as it appears."

"Come across with me now and I will introduce you to him. This is Jamie McGlusky, the man you've heard me speak of so often. He is known to three-parts of the world. Some men worship him, others loathe him; to some he appears a devil incarnate, to some he is almost a god. He is the strangest contradiction in terms that I have ever run into. For all that I would trust him with my last dollar, or for that matter with my life."

The athletic young woman stood gazing in McGlusky's direction with eyes that missed nothing. She was sizing McGlusky up in her own brain, for it was with her an article of faith that no man could do her picking and choosing of friends for her; she attended to that job herself. As McGlusky watched her advance with Maynard, he, with his almost unerring judgment,

sized the young woman up as a person of most decided character, and he murmured to that considerable soul of his:

"There's nae a weak spot in yon wumman's armoury. She carries her head like a mighty huntress, and her feet fall so firmly that you'd almost expect to see her footprints on the boards she treads on, and yet her foot is as light as the fluttering of a bird's wing over a flower, but unless ma first impressions are all wrong, she is as wilful as the deil himself."

A moment later Maynard introduced the pair and Jamie McGlusky, pulling himself up to the full of his height, remembered that in his blood ran strains of gentility that had come down to him from Highland chieftains. As the woman held out her hand McGlusky drew himself to the full of his height and bowed with a grace and dignity that made Maynard gasp, for it had been an aphorism with McGlusky as long as he could remember anything, that meeting a woman, rich or poor, high or low, old or young, a man should draw himself to the full of his height in front of her with his feet close together, hand outstretched, and bow to her from the hips. This attitude he always claimed, and rightly claimed that it gave an air of breeding to the man and covered the woman with respect and the man with dignity, and on points like that McGlusky was irreproachable. The pair were eyeing each other and doing their own sizing up when Maynard said:

"Jamie McGlusky, this is Miss Judy Hiscox, a lady who has money to burn and burns it, but she doesn't waste a dime. You have a scheme which strikes me as being just about glamorous enough to appeal to Miss Judy, so now you've shaken hands I'll leave you to the tender mercies of my bar tender and your own devices."

That was Harry Maynard's way always. He would bring two people together and explain one to the other

and then draw out, and let each play his or her own hand. Sometimes he would take chips in the game himself at a later stage of development, acting upon his own judgment and upon the advice of the two parties. One thing he would never do, and that was introduce a waster to a square person. So it had come to be recognized as something worth having to get an introduction by Harry Maynard on any kind of a proposition, for everything was on the level that came to the astute mind of the old-time champion athlete. He would take a hand in matching two game birds to a fight to the death in a cockpit, or he would bring two folks together over the matter of taking up a hundred square miles of territory somewhere away in the interior and stocking the same with cattle. Gold mining and silver prospecting parties he had fathered in the same way he was attempting to father the meeting between McGlusky and Judy Hiscox, and in the course of his adventurous career he had been upon the edge of making millions more times than he had fingers and thumbs, but somehow or other, just at the critical moment, the gods had always ceased to smile upon the venture, and Harry Maynard would step out feeling right down to the bottom of his pockets to find a dime, but his cheerfulness would never rub off. Men had seen him hurt in more than one wild foray in that wild city of wild men, but no one had ever known him raise a squeal when he lost blood or gold; he was just a game sport, not a skin-all gambler. That both McGlusky and Judy Hiscox could keep their end up without any advice from him he was thoroughly well aware, and so he left them to it without any qualms whatever. He had not the ghost of a tremor of a doubt about McGlusky treating the young woman with respect and deference due to her sex, neither for that matter had he any delusions concerning the treatment that McGlusky, or any other man would get, who forgot

himself so far as to take a liberty with the daughter of Wild Bill Hiscox and Calamity Jane.

Once Maynard had introduced the girl to a handsome hell rake who was noted for his gallantry; and a mutual friend had remarked to him a few minutes after he had given the gallant the introduction:

"Say, Maynard, I know you think an almighty lot of Judy Hiscox both as a woman and as a sport. I hardly thought you would run the risk of giving such a feller as that an introduction to her."

"Why not?" whispered Maynard.

"Because that guy, though he's one of the best among men, is a foul hell hound where women are concerned."

"Is that so?" Maynard had drawled. "Well, if he plays any hell hound tricks with Judy Hiscox, why I'll be chief mourner at his funeral the day afterwards, don't you make any mistake about that, for the man don't live who can throw insults in Judy's way and live to brag about it."

Hearing a little cynical laugh behind him as he ceased speaking on that occasion, Maynard had wheeled, and fixing his jet-black eyes upon the eyes of the other fellow he had whispered in his soft, silky fashion when roused:

"Man, if Judy's gun fails to work the oracle, guess mine will not make mistakes."

There was nothing emotional about the meeting between McGlusky and Judy. They were both far too well balanced for either of them to display their feelings. After the bar tender had appeared noiselessly at McGlusky's elbow when Maynard had left, McGlusky, bowing with that quaint old-fashioned courtesy of his that was part of his natural equipment when with women, requested the lady to name her poison. She had instantly replied with a smiling glance in the direction of the bar tender:

"Say, boy, mine is a mint julep, more mint than julep, please."

"I guess," chuckled the bar tender, "that julep is a new name for whisky, anyway it is a new name on me, Miss Judy."

"That's all right, Marcus," responded the young Amazon, "call the thing by any old name you like as long as we understand each other."

When the pair of newly met acquaintances had sampled their drinks and had pledged each other's health, they drifted into conversation with a casualness that would have told any listener that each was master and mistress of the diplomacy of business. Sometime, from the very first moment, McGlusky had determined to make the girl approach the issue that had drawn them together before he unmasked his batteries at all, and they touched upon half a dozen topics lightly before the Amazon, tapping the table with the edge of her glass, remarked:

"I am told, Mr. McGlusky, that you have a scheme in your brain that's worth while considering and that you want money backing. If so, and you care to trust me with the outline of your plot, why put your cards on the table and we'll talk. I won't say that we'll do business; we may or we may not. If I like your idea I'll make you a money proposition; if you like me and my proposition, why, you'll fall into step with it and we'll clinch the matter over a couple of drinks, but if not, why, we'll shake hands and go our different ways with no hard feeling on either side."

"That," replied McGlusky, "is just about the kind of talk I expected to hear from ye, young ledzly, after I had looked into your face. I'm no the kind that throws compliments at the feet o' every wumman I look at, and I'll be perfectly frank and say that although I've seen better lookers in ma day and forgathered wi'

the same, I have never looked upon a face that advertised brains an' grit more surely."

A look of utter astonishment fluttered for a moment over the strong, handsome face of Judy Hiscox. Hundreds of men had told her that she was beautiful, and she had tossed the compliment over her shoulders and had replied to it with light badinage, but in all her days from the time she had been a school girl, no man had ever told her so brusquely that he had met better-looking women, and McGlusky's frank honesty in this respect tickled her, and woke the humorous streak that was her salvation, and had been her life's salvation on more than one occasion. For Judy was, under a calm exterior a mine of keen, quick humour, and could get a laugh out of situations that would have broken down the guard of 99 out of every 100 women she had come in contact with in her wayward lifetime. Putting her finger tips upon the edge of the table she leant forward and looked McGlusky squarely in the face with eyes that were dancing with devilment, whilst her lips were quirked in a smile that made her, if not radiantly beautiful, at least wonderfully winsome, in the eyes of any man.

"McGlusky," she repeated, "I felt from the first that I was going to like you, but now I'm sure of it. A man who can be so downright honest as to say to a woman who feels young enough to be wooed, what you have said to me, is a man whose word I feel inclined to bank upon heavily. Like you, I don't consider I am a beauty. When I was only a slip of a girl I had a good, solid brain, and an old woman used to say to me:

"Judy Hiscox, beware of the man who squeezes your hand and calls you a dream o' loveliness. In the first place he'll be a lear, and in the second place he'll be no more to be trusted than a copper-headed snake."

Then, switching the conversation off from right

persiflage to real, solid business, the young woman said abruptly:

"Get down to business, Mr. McGlusky, tell me just what your proposition is, I am a quick dealer in all things and know how to make my mind up without anybody's help. If I like the sound of your proposition, why, I'll just go home and sleep on it, and by noon tomorrow I'll give you my yea or nay, and if it is yea, why, my cheque will be ready for you to plank down in the bank any hour you may require it."

This keen challenge suited McGlusky down to the ground, and he said:

"It's very easy to tell that you are the daughter of Wild Bill Hiscox, by the way you come to a point, Miss Judy."

"Yes, I am the daughter of Wild Bill Hiscox and my mother was called Calamity Jane. I don't know and I don't care whether you have heard the truth concerning my parentage or not, but I like to stand level on my two feet in front of any man I am going to do business with. Wild Bill was my daddy and I am proud of the fact, and Calamity Jane was my mother and I am not ashamed of her, whatever else she was, she was all woman, and whether my father and mother were wedded or not I have no proof, that they lived together for years I have old letters of theirs to prove, but it does not matter to me whether they were tied together by a parson, or whether they had a duck and drake wedding. I know my daddy was true to my mother right up to the hour when a coward snuffed his great life out by shooting him from behind."

McGlusky had been warned by Harry Maynard to expect plain straightforward speaking from this young loneer woman, but he had scarcely expected a talk as shrewd as this from her lips. He gazed at her out of his shrewd eyes under brows that were almost frowning and did his best to swiftly size her up, and the conclu-

sion he arrived at was that, while she would say things about her parents in relation to marriage she would not tolerate any gibes from any man. One other thing McGlusky noticed, and that was that every time the girl stood up or made a movement with her body, her hands fell with the natural drop of a practised gunman to her hips and nestled where, he shrewdly suspected, she carried a concealed weapon. That she was as virtuous as the dawn of a new day he would have staked his immortal soul, and his whole nature went out towards her, and he ardently hoped that he would be able to interest her in his seal poaching venture. When it came to talking business, the man did not breathe who could give McGlusky any points in straightforwardness.

He was one of those rare men who could draw a direct line in his conversation and follow it straight, never using two words where one would do, and never hiding a solitary fact that he considered it fair for the other person to be acquainted with. It was a maxim with him that half the troubles that spring up between business partners arise from the fact that one or the other, or perhaps both, have hidden something from the other before closing the business deal, and he always laid his cards down, straightly, cleanly, but cannily, emphasizing the value of his own assertions, and showing where, how and when the profits could be made. It did not take him half an hour to explain the whole of his proposed adventure to Judy Hiscox, and she, with her keen intelligence grasped his points, and at times broke in upon his monologue with a sharp, shrewd question which showed that her brains were not made of mud. At the close of thirty minutes Judy was in possession of all the facts as far as McGlusky himself knew them; he told her that he wanted a partner with money to fit him out with a top-hole barquentine or barque, the sort of craft he wanted could be picked up

in San Francisco harbour he was assured, provided the cash to pay for it was ready to hand, as for the crew, he laughed a swift joyous laugh when he was questioned about this item of his proposed outfit.

"The crew? Why, I'll pick up a crew here at the Golden Gate that would follow a good game leader through the sluices o' Hell to the fire boxes o' that region. There are men o' all nations here hanging around Tar Flat, maistly ye can pick them by their bent or broken noses, thick ears and scarred faces. They are the sweepings o' the Seven Seas, men who have raised Cain in all the treaty ports in China, and have rioted in maist o' the sinks that exist between Hades and Timbuctoo. Better sailor men never fought under Nelson or followed the seas under Drake. But they want a man over them and," he smiled almost wistfully and fondled his great massive chin meditatively ere he continued saying, "weel, I'm no thinking verra much o' any mon who has to advertise his ain qualities by filling his mouth and blowing off his ain praises by the bushel. All I will say, Miss Judy, is that I'm thinking before ye close this deal, if ye feel like sponsoring it after ye've slept on it, ye should take a couple o' hours around the waterfront, and talk to the reputable skippers and ships' officers whose vessels ye'll find lying there, and ye'll question them concerning Jamie McGlusky, and if what ye hear aboot me is nae to your liking, why throw the deal off, and there will be nae hard feeling between us."

Having said these words, he sat still fondling that mighty chin of his, and looking introspectively into space, until his eyes were filled with a far away light, and then he spoke in a voice that was strangely gentle, coming from such a man as he looked.

"I love the saft, gentle ways o' life mysel', young ldy; the ranting, roaring, bullying, brow beating sort o' mon never appealed to me, either as a pal or a

captain; a saft word will smooth things out much better than a mouthful o' curses, at least that is ma ain findings in the walks o' life. All I ask," he added, "is a fair and honest week's work from any man' who draws pay aboard a ship under me, honest work and clean living, and God help the mon that tries to get away with anything else. I never begrudge ma siller to a mon that earns it, for I have had to work maesel' many a time and oft for a weekly wage, and when that has been the case it has always been ma ambition to dae a bit mair work than any ither mon who has to toil alongside o' me, and I hate a shirker just as much as I hate a boaster."

A second later he continued saying: "A square deal between business pals is worth all the saft soap finessing ever invented by the deil to make men crooked. I gie what I expect to be given, nae mair an' nae less, and Miss Judy, here's ma hand on it, tak' it or leave it."

Judy Hiscox reached out a hand that had not a tremor in it, and clasped that of the big, rugged adventurer and looked him squarely in the eyes as she did so, then she spoke her mind, saying:

"If you live up to the gospel that you have preached to me here, sitting in this saloon to-night, Jamie McGlusky, you and I are going to sail the seas together as two good comrades, and win or lose in the matter of making money, we are going to be pals."

"What's that—what's that—what, sail the seas together, ye're no thinking o' joining in wi' the enterprise your ain self surely?"

Instantly a change came over the handsome girlish face, and the eyes that had been dancing so joyously a moment before looked out as frostily as the eyes of Wild Bill, her father, when he looked down the barrel of his gun.

"I mean just what you surmise; I am going to go with you, and will act as your supercargo. I don't

know enough about sailor men's work to ask a position on the craft as an officer, though I have had half a dozen swift cruises amongst the islands in various kinds of craft, mostly trading schooners, but I've got common sense, and a better education than most super cargoes ever have, and what I don't know you can soon teach me, and I will then be able to look after my own interests on the ship and its doings, and also I think I could be helpful in the matter of lending a woman's wit when it comes to business operations."

That Mac felt more than doubtful about this proposition he allowed his manner to show. The woman showed the mettle she was made of at once by exclaiming:

"If you don't like my proposition, Jamie McGlusky, we will have one more drink, and shake hands upon it and no harm done. Just think that over; I like a man who thinks three times before he opens his mouth once—if he sticks to the thing he says when once he has said it."

"Why do you get up in the stirrups so almighty quickly?" gasped Mac.

"Because," replied the bonny lass, "I'd rather walk a journey any old time than ride an unwilling horse."

After that terse little speech the pair sat back in their chairs and eyed one another like a couple of duellists who realize each that the other is like a bit of steel, worthy of all his or her brains. So skilful a player of a game of this kind was Calamity Jane's daughter, that she sat dumb until McGlusky spoke, thus making him make the first move in the matter of further negotiations. This did not rouse the volcanic nature of the big fellow in the least, for if there was anything on this old planet that Jamie McGlusky had a contempt for it was a weakling, either in physical or mental matters, and he was swift to discern that this young demoiselle

was nobody's fool. As she sat confronting him she suddenly resorted to a trick. That brawny son of Anak had begun to look upon Judy Hiscox as something pretty nearly masculine in her nature, if not in her appearance, but to judge from the girl's next remark she must have possessed the gift of intuition in regard to the reading of the thoughts of men. For as she drew her powder puff over her face, and noticed the stare of blank astonishment that fled over McGlusky's speaking countenance, she uttered a rich rounded laugh, and fixing her eyes steadily on the eyes of the sun-tanned face of the man in front of her, she remarked:

"Don't judge everyone by appearances, McGlusky. A woman is not of necessity a daughter of the night because she powders her nose, my friend."

Mac's astonishment at the levity of this remark following upon the crisis that had arrived in their business negotiations, seemed to tickle Calamity Jane's brilliant daughter, and as McGlusky watched the laughter-laden face in front of him his own face became less grim, and his mouth curved into at least a semblance of silent laughter. At this transformation of his features Judy Hiscox chirruped gaily and said:

"I think I like you better, McGlusky, when you let the lighter side of your nature come a bit nearer the surface, so," she continued, "my motto as a general rule is, give me the man with the poker face; I hate to deal with the shallow dude who carries all he thinks, or thinks he thinks, between his hair and his ears, that sort are too shallow to tie to, unless you are riding for a business fall."

Mac was too good a student of human nature not to know that the woman sitting *vis-à-vis* with him was giving him a chance to rearrange his thoughts, and at least meet her half way with regard to her proposition *re* accompanying the sealing expedition. She was, in fact, conceding him a certain sort of advantage even

whilst she so cleverly upheld her own demands, and her manipulation of this end of the conversational campaign raised Judy ninety per cent in the estimation of McGlusky, who dearly loved to get the better end of a business arrangement at all times. Not that he was mean, for there was not a mean streak in the man's composition, but he had Scotch blood in him which made him love to take the biggest end of the log home with him when he had struck a bargain.

"What was it you had in your mind," demanded the girl, "that made you prick your ears up like a camp watchdog when I suggested that I should accompany my money on board the vessel that is to carry out our venture if we come to terms?"

"Weel," murmured McGlusky, "I guess that the better plan wi' a lassie as level-headed and experienced in the ways o' the world as ye are yourself, is to be perfectly plain and downright."

"Let me pay you the compliment," cooed the lassie, "by saying that you are not at all a bad judge of character. There is nothing I like better than plain speaking when I am making a bargain."

"Weel, if ye want it plain ye shall hae it plain wi' nae frills on it." The ghost of a smile disappeared from Mac's mouth, and the girl noticing this, chuckled inwardly, and then Mac unloaded his guns with a vengeance, saying:

"I'm no in favour o' a wumman good looking as yoursel' making part o' a crew o' roughnecks such as I shall hae to pick for the job I propose to carry out amongst the Japanese sealing preserves. Ye ken," he added, dropping slightly into the Scotch vernacular which always bubbled out of him when he was roused. "Ye ken that a wumman as full of life and vitality and—weel, let's be plain aboot it, as good a looker as ye are yersel', is almighty dangerous cargo for any vessel to carry."

Calamity Jane's daughter put her elbows upon the table, and clasping her hands together in front of her palpitating bosom, she allowed a little pucker to appear between her eyebrows, and a glance like sunlight on steel from her eyes flickered over the bronze face of her *vis-à-vis*, as she ejaculated in a slow, drawling voice that had just a tinge of laughter in its tones:

"Me dangerous, McGlusky, dangerous to whom? To your crew or to yourself, my man? Come, be honest. You mean I should be dangerous to yourself, by which I take it that you mean that you are an emotional milk-sop, who cannot be brought into daily contact with a passably good-looking, healthy girl without becoming enamoured of her like some city dude, out on a vacation, or more like a moon calf that is being weaned from its mother out of season—you both surprise and disappoint me, Jamie McGlusky. I had sized you up as a he-man."

As these scathing words fell upon the ears of the adventurer a ruddy flush swept over his face that showed distinctly through the sun-burned tan.

"Ye have no got the rights o' the matter, ye air gnawing the bone an' throwing the meat away, Miss Judy," he exclaimed, "it's no o' mysel' I am afraid in regard to you. I am no a leddy's mon at any time, and I can assure you that what lies in front o' any mon who goes seal poaching in Japanese waters will give him plenty to do without philandering with his business partner, supposing of course that you stick to the idea that you have expressed in regard to taking part in the cruise."

"It is that or nothing, McGlusky, with me, either I go with you or my money does not."

The two sat eyeing each other appraisingly for quite a little space of time ere Judy continued:

"I have spent so many years of my young life amongst cattlemen, gold seekers, and western adven-

turers of all kinds that I have not the slightest fear of not being able to keep my end up aboard ship under any circumstances."

There had come a harsh tone in the young voice during the last few moments, but with the skill of a born actress she changed all that by remarking in tones that fairly rippled from her lips:

"Just make up your mind, McGlusky, that I am to go with you on this adventure. The money terms we have discussed, and we can easily make a suitable bargain, so don't let us split up what seems to me to be a real good proposition over a mere matter of silly, sloppy sentiment. The type of men," she added, "that your crew will consist of is a familiar one to me. I have been more or less in touch with roughnecks for the greater portion of my life, and to tell you the honest truth, I do not think that that type of man is nearly so much to be feared by a lone woman as the forked-tongued coyotes one meets in cities."

"Weel," grumbled McGlusky, "if that is your last word, why, I shall have to say yes to it, though I had much rather you had not insisted on coming with us; the terms we have discussed I will now run over and see that there are no mistakes in either of our minds."

"I'll put those terms in writing to-morrow morning directly after breakfast, McGlusky, and then there can be no mistake on either side; at present the arrangement between us seems to be that I am to find two-thirds of the money to purchase a craft suitable for our expedition and you are to find the rest of the money."

"That is so."

"Well, that suits me. The next item in our agreement is that you are to work out the salary or wages, whichever you like to term it, as skipper of the vessel, you having informed me that when in Australia you had taken out a captain's papers, and stated that those papers still hold good here in American waters."

"That also is correct," replied the elated McGlusky almost breathless with pleasure. A twinkle came into the young woman's eyes as she added this point to the verbal agreement:

"I am to act as supercargo without salary, and the wages of the other officers and crew of the vessel we secure will be taken out of the profits, if any, that will accrue to the expedition after the first voyage."

"Quite correct."

Mac had his best business manner on now, and kept all useless or unnecessary words out of his remarks.

"The chief item in our agreement," remarked Judy Hiscox, "is the division of the profits. We are to split fifty-fifty on the profits, and if there are any losses, why I shall have to attend to it as I take it you are not in a position to incur any expense other than what you put up for the purchase of the craft we are going to use?"

"You have it all in a nutshell, Miss Judy, but put it in writing, and let me know at your earliest convenience what you think of the scheme. I have told you what I estimate the cost of securing the seal furs will be, and have told you to a cent what those same furs will fetch here in the Frisco market."

"We quite understand each other, Mr. McGlusky, and now what do you say, one little drink and I'll wish you good night, or rather good morning, for time has slipped away whilst we have been fixing up this outline of our proposed partnership."

The drink was very soon forthcoming, and as the pair raised their glasses to their lips they looked into each other's eyes fairly, squarely and frankly, and the woman said brusquely:

"Here's luck to our venture!"

"Good luck!" responded Mac, and the episode ended.

The last thing Mac heard of his feminine partner-to-be was a low, mellow laugh that sounded in

his ears like the soft rich music of muffled bells as she bade Harry Maynard good night. "Weel," he murmured to his own soul, "when I lost my schooner on the reefs outside Honolulu, an' had mighty little left to make a fresh start wi', I thought destiny was playing it down low on me, but since I've met the daughter o' Wild Bill Hiscox and Calamity Jane, I think I can see the way tae mak' a fortune." Then the philosophy in him bubbled out. "I'm thinkin' adversity often fashions out o' our infirmities the very weapons with which we hew our greatest triumphs. The ravens that fed the prophet o' old air feedin' ye wi' a spoon, Jamie McGlusky, an' I'm no sayin' ye dinna deserve it."

CHAPTER III

ABOARD THE "BONNY JEAN"

"It whad be as false as hell to say that ye hae the gift o' the gab ma friend—ye hae only the gab wi'out the gift."

McGlusky paused in order to look carefully over the enormous bulk of a ship's broker who had been trying to sell him a full-rigged barque at what Mac considered an extortionate figure.

"I'm no blaming ye," he continued, "for trying to make a good bargain for your firm; that is every mon's duty tae himsel' and tae his employers. What I am blaming ye for is for sizing me up as a saftie who can be filled up wi' lies as a bar tender fills a cask through a funnel. Seeing that I am o' a meek and gentle disposition, I'll no call ye a lineal descendant o' Ananias, for that might tempt ye to deeds o' violence, seeing that ye are nearly double ma size, and as I propose to start on ma voyage three weeks from to-day I'm no seeking to be damaged the noo, so I'll content masel', seeing that ye hae wasted twa days o' ma time looking over this sea tub, ye call a barque—— I'll be content to say wi'out any embellishments or any fancy trimmings that ye air not only a lear, but a clumsy lear, an' as damned stupid as ye air ugly, for your barque does not come wi'in a day's journey o' the specifications that ye gied me in your office, and have repeated to me by word o' mouth. Ye air a hopeless derelict on the sea o' life, born tae drift hither, thither, an' tae set—nowhere.

"Ye've insulted ma intelligence, besides wasting ma time, and for the price o' a brace o' drinks I'd squeeze ye into a beer barrel and pull ye oot o' the bung hole, and I'd no alter the shape o' ye, ye backboneless big jelly fish, by doin' it." A second or two later Mac continued his tirade, saying:

"I'm no the sort o' mon to lose ma temper, and I'm no going to lose it wi' ye the noo, but I've known the time when I would hae used hard language tae ye for making me seem a fool to those who are interested wi' me in this business, by wasting precious time as ye hae made me do."

The agent stepped as far away from McGlusky as the breadth of the deck would allow, and gaped at the man whom he had been hectoring for the last few hours whilst showing him over the barque.

"Ye took me for a fool up to five minutes ago," rasped Mac, "and noo maybe ye'll tak' me for a South Seas missionary, but I'm neither yin or the ither; I'm a mon who has forgotten mair aboot ships than the father that begot ye knew aboot building babies, or he was in a dommed hurry over your ain foundations; listen to me noo Mr. Ship's Agent, I'll gie ye just twa thirds o' the price ye're asking for this barque, and"—pulling out his watch and holding it in his palm—"I'll gie ye just five minutes to say yea or nay to ma offer."

The ship's broker shuffled his feet for a moment or two and then began his defence by saying:

"The price you offer is er—preposterous, I couldn't look at such an offer. I don't mind knocking off, say five hundred dollars from my price, but that's my best offer."

Mac looked up from the watch in his palm and gazed under lowering brows at the agent and then rasped out:

"That's twa minutes gone out of the five I gave ye; I am no a haggler, I'm a business mon and know ma

own mind. When I offer a price I mean a price, tak' it or leave it."

After a moment's cogitation the agent, coughing nervously behind his hand, exclaimed:

"I'm not in the habit of doing business this way; I, I like——"

"I ken richt weel," snarled McGlusky, "what ye like tae do, ye like to fill a mon up to the inside o' the roof o' his head wi' lies until they come spilling oot o' his ears, but ye're no going tae do anything o' that sort wi' me, dae ye tak' ma price or dae ye not? I'm telling ye this, that if I step off this vessel on to the wharfside wi'oot making a deal, I'll no touch your barque as a gift let alone buy it."

Without saying another word McGlusky glanced at his watch, gave a sharp, ugly little cough and then lifted the watch and dropped it into his waistcoat pocket, and as he did so he gave the agent a look of such sardonic determination that all opposition vanished from the manner of the seller, and he, with a volley of curses, accepted McGlusky's terms, and together they walked off the barque to the office of the agent which lay opposite that portion of the wharf front. After the necessary papers had been filled up Mac produced his money which had been handed to him a few hours earlier by Judy Hiscox, and the deal was complete. When the broker had handed McGlusky his receipt he produced a bottle and a couple of glasses and, loading the latter, he tossed off his own drink, saying:

"Well, McGlusky, I did not make as much out of you as I expected to make when I first met you, but I didn't do so badly considering the price my people paid for the barque and the price you bought it at."

He smirked as he made this statement until a big, fat smile ran over his loose-lipped mouth, and the lower part of his lip seemed to run straight down into his neck without finding anything very much in the way of

a chin to stop its progress. Mac drank his liquor and drank with relish, and remarked:

"Weel, I didna expect a present o' the barque and ye haena gied me one. I've paid ye just aboot what I consider a fair thing for the craft considering the prices that shipping is fetching in Frisco waters at the present time, but ye needna flatter yoursel' that it was your ain salesmanship, or blustering, got me up to scratch to the price that I have paid ye; I had sized ye up as soon as I set eyes on ye, for I have made a study o' human faces from my boyhood, and I ken weel a mon with his Adam's apple in a line wi' his lower lip, may not be a co'ard, but if he is anything else he is a miracle, so when it came to the finish o' oor deal I just jumped on ye wi' both boots and ye wilted under it as I knew by the make and shape o' your lower jaw ye would. Now, my lad, ye're no old, in fact ye're quite a young man, and maist young men should be willing to take a wee bitty o' good advice when it costs them naething, and what I am going to gie ye will not cost ye twa cents. You tak' that face o' yours awa' to a plastic surgeon, I know there's yin in Frisco because I saw his sign plate in Market Street, ye get him to build up a chin on that face o' yours, ye'll never be a success as a business man till ye do. If I had a face like yours I'd swap it to a coo for a calf's. Now, nae hard feelings, nae hard words, I'll be wishing ye the top o' the morning."

It did not take Mac long to cross from Oklahoma to Frisco proper by the ferry boat, and once there he very soon found himself in the company of Judy Hiscox, who was esquired by no less a person than Jack London. That meeting between McGlusky and London had its humorous aspect, for no sooner had they clasped hands than Mac opened his batteries, saying:

"Well, Jack, ma laddie, ye've had the laugh o' Jamie McGlusky. Ye gave me dirt that last time, which was the first time we met."

London, who was by way of being quite a good actor, pulled an expression of absolute wonderment in reply to this verbal onslaught, and then said:

"That's one up on me, McGlusky, I've no recollection of having done you dirt."

Instantly McGlusky's cast iron face broke into a grin that absolutely altered the whole of his appearance.

"So," he said, "you young whelp, ye dinna remember getting me to recite some o' ma poetry, don't you? And when I had got on a full head o' steam, and I was lying back wi' ma eyes shut seeking to pick from memory some choice bits that I wanted ye to hear, ye slipped awa', and left me talking to mysel', and when I opened ma eyes I had nay audience except Waterfront Jo, who was lying wi' his head in his arms hiding his laughter and pretending to be asleep. It was a good joke ma son, quite a good joke and one on me, so if Miss Judy has no objection, we'll drift into yonder saloon and hae a wee drappy, and I'll tell ye what I hae done aboot purchasing a craft for our expedition."

So after a little the three crossed the road, picking their way carefully amongst the big cobble stones which in the days before the big 'quake made up most of the streets in the queen city of the Pacific, and as soon as they were comfortably seated Mac remarked, speaking directly to the young woman:

"I know that ye hae told a good deal o' our business to this laddie here, so I can open ma heart, and tell ye what has happened the morn, but Miss Judy, whilst I know that Jack London has the reputation for being as straight a man as God lets the sun shine on, it's no wise to let too many know the least thing about our proposed sealing expedition. These Japs, with whom we shall have to battle, are about the most wide awake people in the universe, especially in regard to their world-wide system of collecting information, which is another

word for their national spy system. You may rest assured that there is very little goes on in this port of San Francisco that is of any interest whatever to the Japanese Government that is not noted here by Japs who, working in one capacity or another, swarm all over the place, going where they like, coming as they like, doing what they like, seeing all they want to see. If they get wind of this proposed expedition of ours, why, there will be a gunboat on our tracks as soon as we get anywhere near the scene of our operations. That," added McGlusky, "was the real secret of old man McPherson's downfall; I haven't a shadow of a doubt about that myself, either the old man talked, or his crew chattered when ashore, and the Japanese spies that swarm all over the islands, as well as on the American western coasts, got hold of the information and passed it on rapidly to Tokio, and the Jap naval authorities attended to the rest." After sitting frowning for a minute he continued saying:

"When I was knocking about the Australian coasts I knew to my own certain knowledge that Japanese spies were at work taking soundings in regard to all the waters adjacent to Australia, noting currents and soundings, and picking up information generally that might be of use to Japanese fleets on some future occasion, and the thoroughness that the Japs displayed doing that work was absolutely astounding. Mind ye, I'm not thinking myself they have any designs at present upon Australian territory, but they are cute enough to be aware that some day or another it may suit the interests of the Australian people to join forces with America, in which case Australia and her coasts will play a tremendous part in any war that may eventuate between Japan and America, and so the brown men, with that great foresight which is one of their chief characteristics, had set out to chart all the Australian waters in a systematic manner which would astonish the Australian

and American authorities if they were aware of it. I," said McGlusky, "gave information to the government of one of the great States at that period, and I was told pretty plainly to attend to my own affairs and leave naval matters to the naval personages interested in them. I'm only mentioning these things to you to show you that I am not talking of pipe dreams when I say that we need to be as close lipped as Egyptian mummies over our plans. I'm no what might be termed an over-nervous kind o' a mon, but I hae a grain o' Scotch caution, and common sense under my hair, so I'm asking that if ye must talk to your friends about this trip that ye are going to take, why make up some pretty story about a trading expedition, and mix wi' trade a story o' romance and pleasure, and if you think fit, Miss Judy, throw in a few hints about a wee bit love affair, but if ye value the money ye have already put up for this expedition, don't mention seals or Alaskan waters, for it's no safe for any of us to even talk in our sleep of such matters."

Noticing the grin that passed over the faces of his listeners when he concluded his speech, Mac raised his eyebrows and expressed by his general demeanour his full conviction that he had not been talking through his hat when he spoke of chattering in his sleep, and he remarked:

"Ye may be surprised, but it's a fact none the less, there is scarce a hotel in the city of Frisco or a boarding hoose that has not got a Jap or a Chinaman attached to it, and those Japs and Chinamen pick up the slightest crumb of information in the shape of carelessly dropped words, and they have an almighty keen faculty for putting crumbs of information together until they can map out a story, and such stories mean money to them, if what they pick up is of interest to the Japanese espionage department. Why, you can readily understand that the talk of hotels and boarding houses gets

to Tokio in double quick time if it is of interest to the Japanese naval or military authorities."

"I don't mind telling ye this," said McGlusky, "that I am and always have been a keen student of military and naval affairs in regard to the bearing o' such matters on Japanese and American relationships, and I think it is as sure as shooting that sooner or later war will come between the brown men and the United States o' America, for the brown men are turning the whole of their male population into fighting forces, either soldiers or sailors, and they are rapidly building up a fleet that in a few years will be equal to the best on the world o' waters. The Pacific Ocean is going to be at some future time the scene of the greatest naval fighting that the world has ever dreamed of, such fighting as will make the Battle o' Trafalgar but a matter o' bum boats in comparison. The Japs are great sailors, so are the Americans, and it is ma considered opeenion that in a fight to a finish, and it will be a fight to a finish when it comes, the Japanese will eventually go under, and if they go under Uncle Samuel will see to it that they never raise their heads again, no, not in ten thousand years, an' the brown men air well aware o' that."

"You're taking rather a gloomy view of affairs, aren't you, McGlusky?" ejaculated Jack London, who in the course of the conversation that followed, soon proved that he also, young as he was, had made a pretty close study of the matter which they were discussing.

"No, I'm no taking a gloomy outlook, at least not in ma ain opinion," retorted the big fellow. "But," he added a moment or two later, "I'll tell ye this, laddie, and ye remember it in years to come: If war comes, as I am certain sure in my ain mind it will happen between America and Japan, the terrific battle which will take place in the middle o' the Pacific Ocean, will mean the wiping out o' one fleet by the other, and the crip-

pling o' the ither, and I think that the Japs will go to the bottom o' the Pacific ma ainself, because I know mighty well that the race raised in America is to a very great extent made up o' blood imported from the best fighting breed o' naval men the world knows. America has native-born sons with good strains o' Scottish, English, Irish, and Nordic blood running in their veins, and they have also the best o' the German breeds, and always take into consideration that the Dutch strain o' blood is far more common up New York way than most people are aware of, and people who are bred wi' such strains in them will take to the sea as ducks take to water when America calls upon them, and clever and game as the Jap unquestionably is, he will be up against something greater, bigger and better than himself. But the naval victory that America will win will be bought at such a terrible price that it will leave America crippled for many a long year, for the better part of her fleet will be wiped out as well as the whole of the Japanese Fleet."

• Whilst he had been speaking, McGlusky rested his eyes on Jack London, and he lifted his glances occasionally to the intelligent face of Judy Hiscox, and when he ceased speaking he uttered a funny sort of rumbling curse.

"Look beyond," he muttered through gritting teeth, "see that brown deil dressed all in immaculate ducks who's pretending to be attending to the tables in this saloon, blast his coffee-coloured long ears, it's a million to one he's had them pricked up listening to every word that has passed between us, and I am glad, mighty glad, that whilst we were speaking o' our expedition we spoke in whispers so that brown blastie could not hear it, but I guess he heard all I had to say with regard to the future relations between his country and America. That coffee-coloured feller is working here as a handyman; he is a Japanese spy. I have seen him

in ither places, dressed in ither ways, and in ma ain mind I am sure and certain that he is a reporter on one o' the newspapers that is published in Yokohama. That's the way the Japs work, damn 'em, and doubly dommed be the stupidity of Americans, in that they allow such spies to roam aboot the country at their ain free will, picking up anything to their ain good or the good o' their ain country, and to the detriment o' this country that gives them harbourage here."

The big fellow sat glaring at the little brown man as though he would have liked to have broken his backbone across his knees, and then he said:

"Come along out o' this, we'll gang to Harry Maynard's saloon, there's nae fear o' any brown spies hanging around Maynard's looking for entertainment, for Harry's a true-born American, and will hae nay spawn o' the deil around."

As they walked towards Maynard's, Mac opened his soul and raved concerning the folly of Americans letting their country be overrun, not only in their ports, but in all their commercial and manufacturing centres, by espionage agents. As soon as they reached the saloon, Harry Maynard gave them a cosy corner where they could talk to their hearts' content without interruption from anyone, and McGlusky went into details concerning his battle royal for terms with the shipping agent across the bay. As soon as McGlusky had finished his explanation, Judy remarked:

"Now the next thing for you to do is to pick a crew, McGlusky, and that is a matter in which I can be of no help whatever."

"I can, though," exclaimed Jack London, "for I think I know every dive where the real shellbacks and roughnecks of the sea hang out, both on this side of the harbour and on the other side, and I don't think," he added, "that in all the world, including the treaty ports of China, you could find a finer assortment of sea

rascals than I can lay my hands on right here, and you will want hard citizens."

"We will that," agreed McGlusky, "and the toughest we have got here won't be too tough for the job that I think lies in front of us. Possibly," he added, "our hardest job will be to find a couple of officers who will size up to our requirements; we want first class seamen, and, above and beyond all, the officers must be men who know how to handle the men we shall pick."

"I've been racking my brains for the last half hour," muttered Jack London, "trying to think of a couple of good fellows who would be all, and do all that you require, and I think I could lay my hands on a couple who will answer your specifications."

He sat gazing into space for a moment or two until Judy Hiscox, tapping him playfully with one of her forefingers, remarked:

"Have you gone to sleep, Jack London, or are you planning a new book?"

"Neither, Miss Judy," chirruped London gaily, "I was just diving down into what does duty for a brain of mine in search of an ideal couple of officers that I am sure you want. I know one if he did not leave for the Australias somewhere, a few days ago, I'm not sure, but I'm afraid so."

"Well, you two men go off and get busy picking your crew. I've plenty to do in the meantime fixing up my own affairs, but I'll be through with what concerns me long before you are ready to take to sea."

They parted at Maynard's, and Judy, getting into a coupé, drove off whilst McGlusky and Jack London stood waiting for a tram to pass that would take them right down to the waterfront and land them at a spot that would suit their needs. Whilst waiting there a Japanese hawkler came up to them and proffered them his wares, and McGlusky, without any ceremony,

shooed the fellow away, remarking as soon as the Jap had passed to Jack London:

"I'm going to swear a vendetta against the Japs from now on. It is my ain considered opinion that if all Americans refused to patronize the Japs here in their own country, the brown men would soon pack up and seek other fields and pastures new. America is going to pay an almighty big price for her slackness in this respect in the days that are yet unborn. Don't think me crazy on the subject because I am sure that I am absolutely sane in this matter. Every Jap is a real dyed in the wool patriot, there's no question about that. They love their country, and they'll work for it, fight for it, and they'll die for it. Though I don't like them, they are great stuff, those little brown men. Their ambition grows on what it feeds upon, and they will not rest content until they are the recognized masters, not only of the whole of the Pacific Ocean, but of all the land adjacent thereto. Quite naturally, they look upon Americans as the greatest stumbling block in the way of bringing off their ambition; the whole of the western coasts of America are absolutely honey-combed with Japs, and Chinamen who act as agents for the Japs, and the knowledge those fellows are picking up and sending across to headquarters is going to cost America hundreds of thousands of lives of fighting men, besides some of the greatest ships that the world owns before this trouble is at an end. I have looked about in Japan a bit and I know that to all intents and purposes the war between America and Japan is now on."

"That's stretching your imagination a bit far isn't it, McGlusky?" asked Jack London. "I quite agree," he added, "as to the possibility of a terrible war between the two countries in the future, but to say that war is now on seems to me to be a pretty tough stretch of imagination."

"No, sir," replied McGlusky, "the war is on from the Japs' point of view because they are gathering information in regard to everything American; right now they have tabulated American resources of every description, both naval, military and civilian, in a manner that would astonish our American boneheads at headquarters; when a nation is collecting information of that kind, then I say that the war is already on, as far as that nation is concerned, and you may rest assured that the brown men will be ten times as well prepared with information when the smash comes, as America will be."

"Hullo, here comes our tram," exclaimed Jack London, breaking in upon the big fellow's remarks.

"Yes," answered McGlusky, "and by the same token here comes that Jap who tried to sell us some of his knick-knacks when we were standing by the corner. He's going to climb on this tram, and I'll bet my Sunday socks that he is on my trail, you mark my words. From the moment when we left that first saloon where we saw that Japanese newspaper reporter working as a common bar room attendant, every movement of mine has been watched, and will be watched until they find out the business that is going to take me to sea aboard the *Bonny Jean*. Curse my folly for speaking in a bar."

As the pair got on the tram car they were jostled and politely apologized to by the Jap hawker, who apparently not taking any notice of them, climbed into his seat and busied himself looking over a small account book which he had lugged out of one of his pockets. Jack London looked at him and frowned slightly as he whispered to McGlusky:

"I'm blessed if I don't think you're right, Mac. That Jap reporter has put this countryman of his on our trail. It's an almighty pity that we cannot deal with him as a Japanese would deal with any spy at work in

their country. Our American laws won't let us deal with him unless he does something else besides just follow us with his gimlet eyes."

"I'm no so sure," muttered McGlusky, "that we canna do something tae the little brown bounder. It's on the cards, Jack, that this little brown nosey parker may meet wi' a wee bit accident, naething verra serious, ye understand. I'll nae be a party to anything o' that kind, a wee mishap that would keep him in hospital for five or six month."

"Oh!" chuckled London, "any little thing like that, that would lay a man up for six months, would be quite in order, you blinking pirate."

"I'm no a quarreller," replied McGlusky, "but I consider it ma duty to safeguard the lives o' any crew that comes on to ma pay roll, and to safeguard any ship that is to be under my command, and I'm telling ye this seriously, Jack, that if yon brown beetle gets under ma foot, I'll crush it. There's mair things happen at sea, laddie, and in the ports o' this city than ever get into the captain's log book."

"I've heard of strange happenings of the kind you hint at," murmured Jack London with a twinkle in his eyes, "but I'm not going to say that I believe them, though they will be a help when I am writing or compiling a novel of sorts."

A grim expression flitted across McGlusky's features as he answered:

"Dom your writin', London, I've known things happen under ma ain eyes that were ten times worse than anything you could ever invent to put into your books."

When they got out of the tram both of them kept their eyes open whilst pretending to be employed in casual conversation, and they both noticed that the Jap pedlar had descended from the tram, and was lurking about in their vicinity, and was covering his manœuvre

by accosting folks on the pavement and offering his wares for sale.

"That little blighter is doing his work and doing it thundering well," put in Jack, "can't help admiring his thoroughness." A coupé was passing, they jumped in. As the coupé drew up, McGlusky went up close to the driver and whispered his instructions to him, and motioning to London to precede him, he jumped into the coupé and the vehicle drove off at a breakneck pace. When they had travelled a considerable distance right along the waterfront, dodging in and out amongst the traffic that consisted of vehicles of every kind known to city life, the driver of the coupé laid himself out for speed, and he refused to notice the blasphemous supplications of the foot passengers of all grades of society that kicked about his driving. Suddenly McGlusky, with an abrupt order, brought the coupé to a standstill, and as it stopped he said to his companion:

"Look out on your side, Jack, and I'll do the same on my side, and see if that brown swine has been riding behind; if so, he is hard on the track of our trail."

Before the words were fairly out of McGlusky's mouth he was out of the coupé, and had darted round behind the vehicle. Jack London, who was remarkably fast on his feet, was not very far behind the big man, and they found that the Jap pedlar had fixed himself like a limpet to the back of their coupé and was unquestionably bent upon following them for purposes of espionage. Both men made a dive without any words at the brown pagan, but though he was to all appearances a very ordinary sort of Jap, he yet proved that he was extraordinarily fast on his feet, and not only was he quick but he was most adroit in his movements, and he gave the pair of them the slip by ducking under the arms of one, and twisting and twirling round behind the other, and was making off when London

grabbed him, and promptly put a half-Nelson hold on the brown neck. Such a hold was quite sufficient to tame most white men, but nearly every Jap is more or less a ju-jutsu wrestler, and knows a stop and a break for most wrestling holds that are known to white men. This fellow knew the stop for the half-Nelson, and he proved his knowledge by instantly breaking Jack London's hold, and turning the tables on the American, he gave him a fall that fairly shook the morning's meal out of the young white man.

As soon as he had thrown London, the Jap went off at a pace that proved that he had not been the slowest amongst his people in the Land of the Chrysanthemum, or if he was, then the residents in that beautiful country must have been amazingly smart on their feet. Not only could he run, but he had the knack of dodging in and out of the pedestrians, but Mac, who was in pursuit of him, was so long in the legs and was such a skilled and practised runner, that in spite of the rabbit-like dodging of the brown man, McGlusky grabbed him at last, and when the Jap tried his ju-jutsu tricks upon the Son of Hercules who had gripped him, he very soon learnt that McGlusky knew pretty nearly as much as any Jap knows about the art of ju-jutsu wrestling, and he not only broke the hold that the Jap had put upon him, but he returned the compliment by pretty nearly tearing the sham pedlar asunder. Mac was not content with giving the spy a pretty fair rough-house handling, but, picking him up bodily, he carried him to the edge of the water, and whirling him round his head, he tossed him well out into the Pacific, exclaiming as he did so: -

"There, ye wee brown catamount, it's a good long swim from here to Yokohama, but by the Lord, that made me if I had the rulin' o' this country, ye'd swim to your hameland, ye would, or go to the bottom o' the ocean."

Of course, quite a large crowd had collected almost

instantaneously upon the scene of the *mêlée*, and as quite a number of the crowd were roughnecked Americans, such as are always found in any western port, McGlusky at once played upon their racial animosities by saying, in his deep-toned voice, which carried far over the heads of those who were near him:

"That wee brown beastie wha's swimming oot yonder is a dommed spy. He's here, ma lads, tae fetch and carry for the naval department at Yokohama, and he followed me and my mate here, who are on business connected wi' the sea; the blastie was poking his nose into American affairs, and so I gied him a bath, and if he paddles ashore when ma mate and I have moved away, why, it's up to you as good American citizens to see that it's the biggest and best bath he's had since he came into this world. I'll be leaving noo wi' ma mate."

Rough voices shouted remarks of approval as McGlusky and Jack London turned to move away, and from the language that reached the ears of the pair, they were perfectly satisfied that there was nothing further to be feared from the attentions of that particular Jappy man, for that day at any rate. As they moved well away from the scene of his latest exploit, McGlusky remarked to Jack London:

"Yon little brown buckey was a spunky wee deil. The way he tackled you and then turned on me, ma mon, was like a weasel tackling a couple of mastiffs."

"Yes," chuckled Jack London, "those pagans from the little island of the Eastern Seas may not fill all our ideas concerning the standard of life. But no one who knows anything about them could deny that they are as full of pluck as a buck weasel is of fight. I've never yet met a thoroughbred Jap who would not fight at the drop of a hat, and I can't help admiring a man who is spunky enough to tackle a scrap against such odds as he was up against to-day."

“Ye’re quite right, ma laddie,” interpolated McGlusky, “pluck is the middle name of every Jap that I ever met, and the sooner the American nation wakes up to the fact that they have a man’s sized struggle lying right ahead o’ them, the better it will be for this people at the finish. If they don’t realize that, then I’m feared that in the end the Pacific Ocean will become an Asiatic lake with the brown men sitting on the top o’ the world in this part o’ creation.”

“Not on your life,” retorted Jack London, “our people are almighty slow on the up-take in regard to naval and military matters, but once they do wake they wake all the way and keep awake all the time, and they won’t leave enough of Japan when they have done with it for it to make a mark on any map of the world, you can rely on that, McGlusky. I know you know the Americans very well, and I am aware that you have a great big soft spot in your heart for them, but only an American born and bred can realize the depths and the power that is in this nation of mine when it is stirred out of its apathy and out of its eternal struggle to amass the everlasting dollar—damn the dollars—they are at the bottom of most of America’s troubles. Our people think too much of mere wealth and not enough of other things that matter, and sooner or later they will suffer for this ignoble quality that is somehow or another eating into the vitals of our people, rich people and poor people alike.”

By this time the two wayfarers had reached that portion of the underworld of Tar Flat, where London knew he would in all probability secure the officers concerning whom he had spoken to McGlusky an hour or two previously, and they struck into a dive that was filled with men of all nationalities. There were Jew crimps and pimps hanging about talking what they called business to half-drunken sailors, and there were a few negroes, and though there were a few Chinese

amongst the crowd, white men thronged the place. Going straight through the crowd, Jack, who was evidently known at that resort, spoke to the bar tender, calling him familiarly by his *nom de plume* of Dopey Sam. Jack soon got that worthy's ear, and asked after a youngish sea-faring officer whom he named as Dinnie Codlin.

"Dunno where he is just now," replied Dopey, "but he's not far away; he was here drinking with some of those toughs over there not an hour ago."

"Have you heard anything about his pal who was first mate with him on his last cruise?" demanded London.

"Oh, he's not far away, either," came the short reply. "Why, thinking of making another trip, Mr. London?"

"Well, maybe I am, but anyway, I can put a good job in the way of both those fellows I'm asking after if you can round them up."

"I'll soon get you a kid who hangs round this dive who will run those two buckeroos down for you, Mr. London. I'm pretty sure they'll be only too glad to talk business with you, for they must be pretty nearly out of their coin by now; they've been running wide and handsome ever since they been ashore this trip, and with them they have a couple of the most expensive poll parrots in Frisco to help them spend their coin, and as they are free spenders, I'm wagering that they are mighty near the end of their dollars."

"Righto," chirruped London, "you tip somebody the nod to find that boy Dinnie Codlin, and then give us a couple of drinks. Mind," he added with a knowing wink, "that you give it us out of a special bottle; I know something about the quality of the dope you fellows serve out to your regular customers here, and as our insides are not made of corrugated iron, we bar that."

A broad and knowing smile distorted the not unpleasant face of Dopey Sam, and reaching up behind the bar he took from a special corner a bottle bearing a familiar Scottish label, and pushing that and a couple of fairly clean glasses across to Jack London and McGlusky, he said:

"There you are, gents, help yourselves, and I'll duck under the counter and either find that man for you myself or I'll put somebody on his trail who will run into him in two rustles of a shark's fin, and when I come back I'll collect from you what you owe me on the bottle."

"You seem to know that fellow pretty well, London?" commented McGlusky as the bar tender, vaulting over his bar, shouldered his way through the rough and tumble crowd.

"Yes," laughed the novelist. "Dopey Sam got into trouble once in Honolulu, and not only pulled a gun but laid out a couple of natives for insulting a white woman and the missionaries were after him, and he would have done a long term inside a jail if I had not witnessed the whole affair and helped him aboard my schooner which was lying in the harbour at the time. I gave him a free passage over here to Frisco, and he's done me many a good turn since that day."

Whilst the bar tender was dodging about looking for the news kid who ran his errands for him, McGlusky and Jack London helped themselves to the contents of the bottle that had been left on the bar for their service, and whilst they sipped their liquor they talked of the subject that was uppermost in both their minds at the moment. It was not, as might reasonably have been supposed, the forthcoming trip of McGlusky to the sealing preserves of the Japs, but of a deeper matter. They both loved the sea, and each of them was inordinately proud of the white men's blood that ran in their veins; most men who battle adventurously through

life have that kind of pride if they are worth their salt, and as the tang of the sea was in their nostrils at the time, the conversation naturally turned towards the ultimate mastery of the Pacific.

Jack London was a very deep thinker apart from his book-writing proclivities, and he said, after waving his hand in the direction of the terribly tough crowd in the saloon:

"McGlusky, these men, and men like them who are under our eyes in this bar are the sort of stuff who will meet the brown men who are ruling the waters that lap our western coasts, and also girdle the coasts of that other great young country, Australia."

"What bug is biting you, Jack, that you could have the ghost of a doubt about who will be masters in the Pacific?" exclaimed McGlusky, with a note of annoyance mingling with surprise in his voice.

"It is," responded London, "because I am not so darn sure as you are, Old Timer, about that same mastery; perhaps it is because I have made a deep and a peculiar study of the Japanese maritime progress that dates from the time when all they possessed in the way of fighting forces on the water was a collection of mere sampans, to the present time, when they have a fleet that for size, strength and efficiency, is not to be sneezed at. I know," he continued, "that if such a thing as war broke out to-morrow between Japan and America, America would sweep the Japs out of existence. But my study of Japanese history teaches me that they are too cute, too cautious, too far-seeing to allow any trouble to spring up between them and America until the day arrives when they consider themselves strong enough to do battle with the finest fleet that America can put into these waters; and make no mistake about it, McGlusky, that day will surely dawn, for I know Japan and the Japanese, and I have had exceptional chances of studying them, and I am

well aware that their ambition is limitless, they are grabbing influence in all the South Sea Islands where they can get a footing, by landing what they call Japanese male immigrants, who mate up in polygamous fashion with the native women, and are producing a breed of semi-Japanese on all sides, and if ever they get a grip on any of those islands they will fortify them just as they are now fortifying Japan itself. Even early as it is in their onward march, the Japanese have made of Japan a mighty fortress that it would trouble any nation to subdue."

McGlusky had been listening with all his ears, but at the same time he had been using his eyes on the rough and ready crowd that filled the bar, and when he spoke his words had more reference to the human material in front of him than to his friend's arguments.

"Look at those fellows, Jack, my lad, and see the make and shape of them; they are all men of mighty limbs and gigantic torso, well perhaps not all, but nearly all, and they have not only fine fighting figures but fighting faces. They are the salt of the sea itself, those men, and I doubt if in the days of the Vikings you could have found a grimmer or more desperately determined lot of citizens anywhere, and America can turn out a tremendous lot of such raw material, and all she wants is a great admiral to lead them to victory and wipe the Japs up if it ever comes to a death struggle. Dinna doubt that, laddie, dinna doubt the efficacy of the white blood, that is something worse than sacrilege."

A second or two later when he had drained his glass, he continued saying:

"Nelson and Togo are the two greatest names that the modern ages have produced in maritime history in my opinion. The country that can reproduce a similar giant when America and Japan meet in a death grapple will rule the waters of the world. God send

that it be America, or the Pacific becomes an Asiatic lake." A second later he added:

"And when the Pacific is an Asiatic lake, then the Pacific Islands and even the great sub-continent of Australia will be under the thumb, aye and under the heel o' the wonderful race o' men who are, in spite of their tremendous abilities, alien to us of the white breed in everything that matters; alien to us in religion, alien to us in ideas concerning industry and commerce, alien to us in all matters pertaining to a high standard of life for the under dog, alien in fact to us in everything that makes life worth living."

When they had reached this point in their conversation the bar tender returned, accompanied by a news-boy, whose left cheek bulged largely with a quid of tobacco which he worked his jaws upon like any seasoned old salt on the waterfront.

"Here you are, gents," exclaimed the bar tender, "this is Mike Delaney, and if anyone can find the sailor man you've inquired for, Mike's the kid that can do it. He knows every dive and every den where the polls hang out a long way too well, the young devil, but he has his uses."

Instantly McGlusky made good with the gutter waif by presenting him with a dollar. When Mike saw this wealth in his fist, he did a double shuffle on the bare floor with his bare feet, and then exclaimed, speaking in the vernacular of the district:

"Say, Bo, what's all this wealth for?"

"Stow the money away and then keep your mouth shut and your ears open," exclaimed McGlusky, and Mike, recognizing the note of authority in the big fellow's voice, instantly shed a good deal of his native impudence and came down to business.

"Who'se you wanting me to find, Skipper?" he demanded, looking out under a shock of tousled hair into the big fellow's face, and as he stood thus he looked

more like a coastguard's terrier than anything either of those men had ever looked upon in any of their travels. In a few sentences McGlusky told the boy all his needs, giving him the names and a description of the two young officers whom he sought to secure. When McGlusky had finished speaking, Mike switched his eyes off the big fellow's face and turned them upon the face of the bar tender, and he exploded at once, saying:

"One of them officers that you want me to find was in here last night with Jack Call, and his woman with the long yaller hair. You mind he was inside here last night, Sam, because he raised a rough house by dousing with his fist the big swede who had something nasty to say about his dame."

"That's right," replied Sam, the bar tender, "I'd forgotten all about that." Then he added with a grin as he looked at McGlusky and Jack London: "A fist fight is of such common occurrence in here, not only every night and every day, but jolly nearly every hour, that a man can't keep track of them in his mind; yes, it was that young officer you were asking me about, McGlusky, and if Mike here can find the one we shall be right on the trail of the other. Those two chaps march pretty much in step, they follow the sea in the same crafts whenever they can possibly get berths together, and they play their money up together when they are on shore."

"Very well," responded McGlusky, and he turned to the gutter terrier, saying: "Cut along now, Mike, go and find that man and bring him to me, and tell him that a man called McGlusky wants him, and wants him bad."

With a short yelp of delight, and without any wordiness, Mike turned and made a dive through the crowd, on through the door and disappeared.

"He sure does know how to make a way for himself

through a crowd," Jack London remarked as he watched the imp's progress.

"He sure does," replied the bar tender, "the imp carries a sailor man's knife, and if any of the big stiffes get fresh with him and start knocking him about, why, I've seen that kid use that knife before to-day."

"Phew!" exclaimed McGlusky, "if he's got a knife at that age, what in the name of Mike will he come to when he's full fledged?"

The bar tender answered: "Why, he'll take to the sea as naturally as a duck takes to water, and he'll be one of these, and one of the toughest. I could find you a couple of hundred like him inside a couple of hours here in Tar Flat running errands, doing odd jobs and learning more than a bit of all the devilment that will be their lot in life when they take to the sea."

Whilst the imp of a boy was away on his search for the couple of officers whom McGlusky wanted, the big fellow, leaving London in converse with the bar tender, strolled from one table in the dive to another seeking to find some familiar face among the roughnecked seamen, for in times past McGlusky had done plenty of man-seeking in Tar Flat when he required a crew, and it had always been a practise of his to go to the toughest dives and pick out his own men in accordance with his personal judgment.

Mac was not infallible in this respect, but very seldom had his judgment been found at fault in regard to picking his men. It was an axiom of his that there is often more honesty and sterling worth behind a battered and broken face than you will find amongst the smooth ducks of the world. He saw many battered faces in his perambulations round the length and breadth of that big dive but not one that was familiar to him, but there was one man whom he ran into who took his fancy immensely. This fellow was so broad in the shoulder, and so brawny in his girth, that he looked

at first glance almost like a dwarf, he had a fair-sized head, and a face that looked as if it had been in all the wars since Trafalgar and Waterloo, but the blue eyes that looked so frankly and so fearlessly up into Mac's own when the big fellow addressed him, were twinkling with unconscious devilment, and the quirks that were at the corners of his mouth spoke for a merry heart and a light one. From his hips up, this queer-looking customer would have suited a sculptor's idea of a modern Goliath, but from the buttocks down he was so short that he looked almost legless. But what his legs lacked in length they made up for in massiveness. He was naked from the hips upwards except for a dilapidated canvas waistcoat which was sleeveless, and his arms as he stood easily bandying words with McGlusky hung loosely by his sides, and a more titanic pair of limbs McGlusky had never set eyes on in the course of all his wandering life; they looked more like a couple of boughs torn from some old oak tree than human arms, and over every inch of them lay masses of coarse, curly, reddish hair. The hands at the ends of these arms matched the limbs they were attached to, for as they swung by his sides clenched, they looked more like a couple of great mauls that woodsmen use than human fists. The length of these two arms matched the enormous girth of him, for they hung well below his knees and their appearance bespoke the massive power that must have lain in them.

This great fellow, seeing McGlusky eyeing him interrogatively, nodded, and then with the free outspokenness of his kind, and with a merry chuckle and a grin, said:

"What are you busy about, stranger, looking for someone you'd like to buy a drink for, or are you carrying a chip on your shoulder to find a little feller of my size to take a fall out of?"

Mac looked at him and laughed, and then replied to the queer speech that matched everything about the quaint personality that he had run into.

"I think you've about sized me up right, my lad. I am looking for someone to share a drink with me; what do you say to it? If you are as dry as you are pretty, by the Lord that made me you could do with a drink."

So this strangely assorted pair sat themselves down at an adjacent table, and McGlusky, having called for the drinks, started the conversation which soon put him in possession of the fact that the dwarf, as he had already named the stranger in his own mind, had been bos'n aboard a ship that had returned from a whaling expedition about a month previously, and though the dwarf had come ashore at Tar Flat with three years' wages in his pockets, he was now between the upper and the nether millstones, or as he phrased it, between hell and low water. When he had disbursed this piece of information, the dwarf nodded, and sent his drink down his seasoned throat with a celerity that spoke of long practise in the art.

"I'm mighty near on my uppers, Cap'n," he confided a second later, "and if I don't find a ship soon, why," he grinned capaciously and added, "I shall have to manhandle one of the Tar Flat cops and get myself put away for a month, or I shall have to live in the streets and fight with the dogs over every bit of grub. I'm not particular, Mister," he continued, his eyes twinkling, "but I don't cotton to the idea of scrapping with dogs for what I eat."

"You mean," interpolated McGlusky, "you want a ship, eh?"

"You're a mind reader, Cap," grinned the dwarf, "I want a ship and a bos'n's rating."

"You've got it," snapped McGlusky, who always made up his mind in that lightning fashion, and in that

manner he attached to himself a follower who was to wade neck deep with him in troubled waters where a man's life was worth nothing more than his own ability to keep it in his hand.

CHAPTER IV

THE "BONNY JEAN" IN BLUE WATER

MAC had scarcely engaged the bos'n and fixed up with him in regard to a little money to carry him along until the *Bonny Jean* was ready to take her crew aboard, ere the boy Mike blew into the dive bringing in his wake a couple of well-set-up young men whom McGluskly immediately recognized as the pair of officers whom he was in search of for the *Bonny Jean*. Between five-and-twenty and thirty years of age these officers looked what they were, a pair of well-seasoned sailor men of the officer class.

Both officers were right royally glad to see McGluskly and to grip his hand and swear allegiance to him in any venture he might have on hand. They did not ask him to go into details, they knew the man too well. The very fact that he was fitting out a special kind of craft, with a picked crew, was intimation enough to them that he had a job on hand that would gladden the heart of any sailor with a big streak of adventure in his outfit. Mac, true to his instinctive caution, did not give them the slightest inkling of the nature of the adventure he was about to start out upon, he simply told them that he was putting out to sea as soon as he could get his barque shipshape, and he wanted them to assist him in picking a crew right away, and he intimated that the crew was not to be picked for a beauty-parlour show.

"I want *men*," he said, and the accent that was put upon the last word gave them a clue that seemed to please them, for their eyes jumped, and they both

grinned whole-heartedly, for they knew by past experience that any sailor who made good to the title of manhood in McGlusky's estimation by the end of a voyage, must be no little white-smocked cherub, but a son of the brine with plenty of salt in his blood, or as McGlusky himself phrased it, "a mon to be a mon needs salt, iron and flint in the blood o' him."

"When do you want us to go crew picking?" demanded the one who rated as first officer, and Mac replied brusquely:

"I'm in nae hurry, lad, ye hae time to hae anither drink and then jump into your work."

This characteristic speech tickled them both, for they chuckled audibly, and, taking their drinks, they saluted their skipper, and as they were the cynosure of all eyes at that moment, there was not a man in that dive who did not realize that McGlusky was the commander of a vessel of some sort or another that was lying in port, and as soon as the two officers began to do the round amongst the fellows in the dive they were joined by the dwarfish bos'n, who told them in language as blunt as their own, that he was McGlusky's bos'n, and was already on duty. The three of them strolled through the dive picking men, and when they had got half a dozen, they cornered them off at one end of the dive and drew McGlusky's attention to what they had found.

Mac went over these fellows with an eagle eye, and after he had put a few abrupt questions he rejected one man who had a good deal of the Greek in his face, with eyes that were too shifty for Mac's liking, and to this man he said abruptly:

"Ye'll nae do, ye can stand doon."

The Greekish-looking fellow snarled in an ugly fashion, and Mac, tossing him the price of a drink, said:

"If ye want to know why I'll no engage ye, why there's nae reason why I shouldna tell ye. To ma mind

ma mon ye look mean enough to steal coal out o' hell, and I'm thinking that ye'd no make a good ship mate for the men ye'd hae to mix with, or a good servant to mysel'."

This plain speaking annoyed the recipient of it so badly that his upper lip went nearly to the cartilage of his nose; showing his teeth in a wolfish snarl, and crouching, he eyed McGlusky malevolently, his hand dropping to the haft of the big knife in his belt. That was enough for the bos'n, who was standing within a yard of the fellow. With a crab-like movement of his short, stumpy, thick legs, the bos'n closed up on the Greek, and, seizing him by the hips, he tossed him so high that McGlusky remarked afterwards, that if the Greek had gone much higher he would have died of starvation before he dropped to earth again, and when he did make the floor again he bounced and then lay still, very still. McGlusky stood, looking down at the fallen Greek with a heavy frown dawning on his face, and for a moment or two he remained silent, then he said, as he turned to the bos'n:

"I'm thanking ye bos'n for what ye did, and the way ye did it; but all the same I'm hoping ye've no killed the blastie, for if ye hae it will cost me some siller to pay for his burying, and he was nae worth that, for he was naething but a skinful of wind, words an' big threats, he were naething but a regular man maggot."

The bos'n, standing with his great arms swinging easily at his sides, continued to look at the motionless carcass of the Greek, and after a long and careful survey he replied to McGlusky, saying:

"This guy was mighty free with his knife. I have only been ashore a matter of weeks, and I have known him to use his knife on three different men, so I thought I had better give him a toss before he had time to use the steel on you, Skipper."

"I'm no thinking he would have been successful if

he had tried it," replied Mac with a grim smile. "I was watching him ye ken, an' a straight blow from a mon's fist flying clean from the shoulder will stop any knife-play providing the man who uses the punch is quick, and knows how to keep control of his nerve."

After that episode the collecting of the crew went on apace; the two officers with Mac, Jack London and the bos'n, having made a collection from the saloon where they had met the boy Mike, followed that youth to a similar dive a few yards up on the other side of the narrow alley way, and after all they only found one man who came up to McGlusky's requirements, and they moved onwards to yet another dive, and in this way they consumed the better part of that day, for Mac was not easily satisfied in the matter of picking his crew, but just as evening was setting in they found a nigger cook who answered all of McGlusky's requirements. This fellow was evidently a merry soul and his quips and jokes in reply to McGlusky's questions went a long way to causing Mac to add him to his crew. The man's credentials, as far as his cooking was concerned, were of the very highest order, so much so that Mac asked him why he was willing to take a berth aboard such an insignificant vessel as a barque. To this query the nigger, who rejoiced in the name of Moonshine, replied that he was fed-up with working on passenger ships, where the work was too hard and the discipline too severe, and he vouchsafed the information that he would like a change to a barque or barquentine going on a trading expedition, as it would give him an easy time, as he would only have the officers and the crew to attend to and no passengers, and from what he had heard of sailing life in the regions of the South Sea Islands he thought life would be far happier for him on board such a craft.

Mac had mentioned incidentally that he was bent on a trading exploit, but he did not specify the kind of trade he was going in for. He had felt in his bones

that it would be unwise for him when engaging his crew to tell them that he was going sealing. But looking his men over he had formed his own opinion concerning any scruples they might have concerning poaching when it dawned upon them that that was their real mission when at sea; as for Moonshine, McGlusky formed the estimate that he would prove as great a lover of adventure as any other man he had picked, for, in spite of his merry gibes and his laughing manner, Moonshine carried something in his face that warranted him to be a man who was not averse to a rough and ready scrap on very small provocation. Leaving one of the officers to attend to the wants of his newly signed-on crew, and taking the other one with him, McGlusky and Jack London made their way to the rendezvous appointed for meeting Miss Judy Hiscox, and that night McGlusky gave her a detailed description of the men he had selected to command the *Bonny Jean*. When he mentioned incidentally the story of the fracas between the bos'n and the Greek sailor man in the drinking dive, he noticed the flash that leaped into Miss Judy's eyes, and the sudden tightening of her lips, and it pleased him when she remarked casually:

"I think, McGlusky, from what you have told me, that I am going to rather like your bos'n."

"He'd nae take a prize in a beauty show, but he has gifts which recommend him as a mon o' parts," replied Mac.

From that hour on McGlusky's slogan was work—work—work, and not only did he slave himself, but he kept his officers and men up to concert pitch; they very nearly tore the inside out of the barque, scraping, cleaning, painting and polishing, and they soon had her spick-and-span, for it was always an axiom of McGlusky's that a ship's decks should be as clean as a dining-room table, and he alleged in his whimsical fashion that one glance at a ship's decks gave him an index to the

skipper's character, for, said he, if the decks are dirty, the skipper is a sloven in his seamanship and in his business attributes. Long before they were ready to go to sea the decks of the *Bonny Jean* were clean enough to eat a meal off, all the seams were fresh caulked where the slightest necessity for such an operation was made manifest. She had quite a handsome figure-head in the shape of a woman greeting the sea with outstretched hands. This figure-head had been allowed to get dismally dirty, and did not look a credit to her owners or her builder. Mac put his men on her to repaint her until that figure-head looked like a real goddess of the seas, and when the work was finished he walked round her, and eyeing the feminine figure at the bows, he exclaimed with pride:

"There, ye're somewhat more worthy o' your ain name noo, for in truth ye look like the lassie I knew long years ago by the name o' *Bonny Jean*."

As soon as the vessel was ready to weigh her anchor, Mac called a consultation between the two officers, the bos'n, and the super cargo, Judy Hiscox. Directly they had seated themselves in the little cabin which was McGlusky's own special and private sanctum, Mac said:

"I've a wee bitty o' bad news for ye. I've been having men fra the Maritime Detective Agency round about our ship ever since I took possession of her, and I have learnt, beyond a shadow of doubt, that Japanese agents are watching our every movement. Everyone connected with this ship must see to it that when they go ashore they keep their mouths battened down, and no wag their tongues concerning anything they may have guessed concerning our ship's mission, and I've had a detective on the trail o' our men when they went to the pubs nearby, and what the men have said has been recorded, and I am proud to say that there's nae been a gabster found amongst our crew, fore or aft, and that is

a good thing for any skipper to know, for it gives him confidence in his officers and in his men.

"I have learnt that they have been questioned by very clever agents o' Japan, who knew too much to put straightforward questions to our shellbacks, but went about it in a more cunning fashion, but I am told that they gleaned nothing. It's true," he added with a little, short, whimsical laugh that was characteristic of him, "that neither officers or crew, so far, know over much concerning my plans, and therefore they couldna tell what they didna know, but the way they kept their mouths sewn up gives me confidence in them all; now I am sure in my own mind that the Japs have us marked down, and we will have to meet cunning with cunning. It's my ain opinion that a white man can be as cute as any Asiatic born o' wumman if he likes to exercise his brains."

He sat pondering very carefully for a minute or two and at last said:

"It was my ain intention at the outset to make a run straight for that portion of the Alaskan coast that is alive with seals, and over which the Japs claim command from having simply hoisted a flag o' their ain there, but since I have found that we are being watched I think a better plan will be to meet guile with guile and beat the Jappy men at their ain game."

It was Judy Hiscox who first broke the heavy silence that had fallen upon the cabin, by saying:

"Captain McGlusky, you're the daddy of this expedition, it's up to you to give orders, and the rest of us will obey. You mark out the path you want us to tread, and we'll tread it." She flashed a glance on the hard, sagacious faces by which she was surrounded and flung them all a magnetic smile that won their hearts for good and all as she added: "I know I can speak for your officers, and your crew, Captain, and I can speak

for myself as part owner, whatever you say goes, and goes right up to the hilt, and no questions asked."

As these hearty words rang crisply through the cabin, the eyes of all men present lit up, even the eyes of Moonshine, the cook, who had already fallen under Miss Judy's spell and fairly worshipped her, and as Judy ceased speaking a lusty cheer broke from the lips of the crowd. As the echoes of that cheer died away, the bos'n let his great, big voice roll out like a kind of gruff thunder, saying:

"Skipper, you've got the break, you set us a course and by the sacred grasshopper o' the South Sea Islands we'll follow it."

This support brought a warm flush to the bronzed cheeks of the great adventurer, and though he said no words in regard to the matter his eyes that gleamed from under his bent brows showed plainly how he felt about those who surrounded him.

"Weel, weel," he ejaculated, "everything in its own hour, and every hour is written, that is a saying that I picked up years ago when I was prospecting for oil in Persia, and those Persian johnnies have wisdom to burn in their brains. I'm going to gie ye orders noo and I expect everybody aboard the *Bonny Jean* to obey them as if they were the law and the Gospel." He flashed a searching glance onto every hard-set face in turn and then continued, saying:

"I know it's hard on a sailor man when starting on a cruise, but we're starting out under peculiar circumstances, so I'm saying just this, that there's never a mon amongst ye must touch liquor, or even hae a taste o' it ashore, but aboard ship ye shall hae a good round peg o' rum for a nightcap, and as a starter before breakfast, but nae drinking ashore, for since ye've left the whole management o' this crew, and this ship, to me, I hae made up my mind that we'll fool the Japs by taking on board a cargo of trade goods for Japan itself, and by

that means we'll walk right into the lion's den, and will twist the tail o' the beastie.

"I will explain my method, seeing I have promised every man aboard ship a bonus on the profits of the whole voyage in addition to his wages, and as I am a man o' my word I'll keep my promise, so I dinna want a whisper to get oot." He stood grinning at them in his whimsical fashion after making this announcement and at last added: "The Jap spies will learn in double quick time the nature o' the stuff we are loading up on the *Bonny Jean*, and when they find we are bound for Japan they will begin to scratch their heads and do some thinking, and I guess they'll arrive at the conclusion that someone has been serving them up wi' pipe dreams in regard to the statement that we were going to Alaska on a seal-poaching expedition."

"That sounds like an almighty cute proposition to me," exclaimed the chief officer, and he queried: "What have you got behind it, Skipper?"

"Just this," answered McGlusky. "I'll take these goods that all the world knows Japan needs for trading purposes, and make the best kind o' a deal I can in Japan, and I will get in with some of the Japanese merchants, and take trade goods from them to the islands that lie between Yokohama and the Alaskan coast, and maybe we'll make a trip or two trading Japanese goods between Yokohama and those islands, and when we have allayed all suspicions, then we will turn our bows towards Alaska and make a swift and sudden run to those frozen coasts and we will then pick up all the seals we require and make our getaway."

A chorus of approval broke from the men, and the second officer, Dinnie Codlin, queried:

"Where do you propose to sell the seal pelts, Skipper? Here, in Frisco, eh?"

"That," responded Mac, grimly, "is a matter that will be decided by circumstances. I have a plan which

lies deep in my ain head, and with all good feeling to you lads, and to you Miss Judy Hiscox, I'll keep it battened down between my ain ears and my eyebrows, for it is the crux of the whole situation, and on it I depend mainly to beat the Japanese gunboats that are sure to be on the prow in those waters. Noo," exclaimed McGlusky, "away wi' ye tae your duties, and remember that I am expecting every yin o' ye tae preserve the secrets, keep them so close that your teeth willna ken what your tongue is talking about. It will be nae use for any mon to whine to me later on an' say he was sorry if he let the Jappy man get wind o' our secrets. Sorrow may be a good thing for a repentant man, but in this case if a mon blabs, and I get wind o' it, his sorrow will bring him a sare head, for I'll knock the block off the man who blabs my secrets, for a long tongue spells a short road tae ruin."

The work of taking in suitable trade goods went on apace, and the crew of the *Bonny Jean* soon worked off the effects of their drinking bouts ashore, when McGlusky's iron rule of hard work, regular hours, sleep, and good solid food came into force, and every man, and Judy Hiscox included, worked to the limit of their endurance, but none of them worked with anything like the tigerish energy that McGlusky threw into his task, for that was one of the main secrets of this formidable adventurer's success in life, he was a worker, and whether he toiled with hands, brains, or with weapons of war his dynamic energy was the dominant note of his character, even in his pleasures and in his lapses from rectitude he was whole hearted. It was a saying of his: "I can forgive a crime in a mon under certain circumstances, an' I can overlook a hundred lapses fra virtue, but if a mon is lazy I'd na gie him shop room in hell even if he wore snow-shoes."

When the *Bonny Jean* was ready for sea she slipped out of port as unostentatiously as possible. Practically

the only person who came aboard to look the well-trimmed barque over and to shake hands with all and sundry aboard was Jack London, who, when parting with McGlusky, said with a twinkle in his eyes:

"Well, Mac, when you come back from this mission I hope to hear you recite the poem which I am sure you will have composed upon it."

The great novelist, being very alert and watchful, successfully dodged the playful clout that McGlusky made at him over this reminder of the poem reciting episode in their friendship. As London wheeled to go ashore, McGlusky clapped a great hand on one of his shoulders and spinning him round as though he were a toy, the skipper said:

"Jack London, lad, if you put that dommed story of my poetry reciting to you in the saloon into yin o' your books, you'll make me the laughing stock o' all my ain old pals who are scattered over the face o' God's earth, north, south, east and west, and there'll be men grinning at Jamie McGlusky in Asia and Australia, in Africa and South America, in India right on to the edges o' Afghanistan, and in many anither corner o' the globe."

"Righto, Old Bird," chirruped Jack London, who, though he had a spice of devilment in him, was one of the most genial and kindest hearted of men, "righto, old sea dog and land shark and seal pirate, I'll not give the world the story o' your lapse into poetry and display it to a sniggering universe." To the day he died Jack London kept that promise, and never used in any of his works that episode in McGlusky's storm-tossed career.

It was the intention of the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* to mystify the Japanese spies as much as possible, so he headed the craft straight for the gloriously lovely Island of Honolulu. There was another reason for making the gem island of the Pacific world his first port

of call, he wanted to get a large consignment of very high-grade pearl shell as part of his cargo for both Yokohama and Tokio, and there was no better spot than Honolulu for buying pearl shell. Ploughing her way through the blue waters of the Pacific, driven onwards by a free following wind, the *Bonny Jean* sped upon her course like a racehorse well ridden. There is nothing in the world that will keep a crew in good heart and good order like the knowledge that they are sailing on a vessel that can beat the breeze itself for speed of motion, and the pace at which the *Bonny Jean* threw the sea knots behind her encouraged the crew of roughnecks who worked upon her so cheerily. Everything they did was done to the rollicking music of a seafaring man's chanty, and the officers and McGlusky himself were as blithe of heart as were the men who worked under them, as for Miss Judy Hiscox, the supercargo who was proving herself to be what McGlusky termed "a she-hog in petticoats for work," she was as gay as any skylark that ever trilled its matin song.

All day and every day the men could hear her humming over a list of songs which she had picked up in many a rough mining camp, as she went about her work as supercargo. She had plenty to do, she had all the accounts which had accumulated in Frisco whilst the cleaning of the ship was going on, to correct and tabulate. This made the men in a good humour, because they knew that with such a systematic worker aboard there were not likely to be any discrepancies in the matter of the statements of profits that would have to be submitted to them when the cruise was over, and on those profits rested their hopes for a big bonus for each man. The food was not only good, but it was prepared in a manner that was something new to that team of toughs aboard ship, for Moonshine soon proved that he was as good as his record had made him out to be as a cook, and his heart was in his work also.

They were a day's journey from Honolulu when half a gale sprang up with that dramatic suddenness that is characteristic of those latitudes. Five minutes before the gale had made itself felt the blue waters of the ocean were rippling gently under the caressing touch of the soft, sweet, crisp breeze. Then the glass had fallen with an almost cyclonic drop, which was a feature of the weather to be expected in those latitudes. McGlusky, who in spite of his recklessness in danger was ordinarily a careful man in his general outlook on life, had been watching the glass as a tiger watches a game trail, for he had been in more than one big blow, when the masts had been ripped out of the vessel he had been in by sudden storms, and he had made up his mind that nothing of that kind should happen whilst he was in control of the *Bonny Jean*, not at any rate if human skill and foresight could prevent such a catastrophe.

At one moment he had been pacing up and down the little quarter-deck humming to himself a jovial song that had a woman and a wine glass in it, and then a sudden sense of uneasiness had taken him to where his ship's glass hung ready for his scrutiny. One glance at it showed him that the mercury had dropped with appalling suddenness. One glance was enough for Mac, the next instant three or four bounds had taken him up on deck again, and his splendid voice rolling out orders kept every man on his toes, ready to trim sails and to stand by for squalls. There could not have been a better man for such an emergency than Jamie McGlusky proved himself to be in that testing time, and his crew turned out to be all he had hoped they might prove to be in a sudden emergency. They were all seasoned men, and so they knew the moment he began to shout his orders just what was going to happen. They never showed the faintest sign of flurry or concern, indeed the main spirit that was discernible

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amongst both officers and men, was a sort of secret and suppressed elation because of the chance that had come to them so early in the voyage of proving their metal to the man under whom they had to serve.

They were absolutely cheerful, though every one of them kept casting an eye aloft to watch the scudding clouds, and their ears were filled with the music of the wind that began to rip amongst the canvas. When McGlusky's orders sent men aloft they went like tiger-cats climbing trees in search of quarry, and the way they handled the big sails proved that there was not an inefficient man amongst them. Soon the wind was upon them like a raging demon, threatening to tear the canvas to tatters and to rip the masts from their bedding in the ship's body, and each man found his hands full with the work that had been given him to do, but in spite of that they each and all had time to notice not only McGlusky himself, but his first and second officers. It was a testing time for the three men in charge of the ship's welfare as well as for the crew, and when that howling blizzard was at its height those men knew that whatever else they might have aboard the *Bonny Jean*, they had a captain and a couple of mates who were past masters at their work.

The waves that half an hour earlier had lain like nothing but sun-kissed ripples on the surface of the sea, now rolled in mighty volume, towering almost sky high, and rushing down into precipitous declivities that looked as if they would reach to the bottom of the ocean. The *Bonny Jean* was picked up and tossed like a cockle-shell, here, there and everywhere, yet never deviating a yard from her course, for Dinnie Codlin, the second officer, and the brawny bos'n were lashed to the wheel, and their united strength was a warrant that the *Bonny Jean* would have to obey her helm no matter how fiercely the elements might, and did, rage. Somehow or another the men had developed an amazing

amount of confidence in the bos'n, for he was one of those men from whom efficiency in his job exudes and permeates to all surroundings. His face was a mask of rugged determination and self confidence as he stood with his short legs straddled wide, and his big flat feet gripping the planking as though he could tear the nails out of it with his toes. He never wore a shirt but always a sleeveless canvas waistcoat, and the colour of his skin was akin to that of many a native of the island towards which the *Bonny Jean* was racing at terrific speed. His hair was blowing in the wind like a battle banner, for he always wore it flowing like a horse's mane.

"A good solid man and one to tie up to in a tight place," was McGlusky's summing up of the bos'n, and his opinion of both his officers and the whole of his crew ran on the same lines before that howling tornado tore itself out. At last Honolulu lay right in front of them and McGlusky was grateful to his God that the sea had gone down to decent proportions ere the *Bonny Jean* dropped anchor off the island, for though these waters were well charted, and most of the reefs definitely marked on the map, there was always a danger of being driven onto some submerged coral reef in a hurricane, and no one knew better than McGlusky how easily a coral reef could, and would, rip the bottom out of a stout ship, and when such a happening occurred in those waters, the chances of a crew escaping with life was fragmentary, for the long sharks, that were all man eaters, hung round the island in shoals. They could be seen from the deck of the barque, moving in the translucent waters like the grey ghosts of the damned. Mac was looking over the side of the *Bonny Jean* just as she dropped anchor and saw how the big sea-hook caught and held in the pure white sand. As the anchor bit and gripped, a bigger school of sharks than even he, with all his experience, had ever seen before came drift-

ing past, and Mac remarked to his second officer, who was standing near:

"I never see a shoal of those grey devils prowling round the ship I'm on but I long to drop a few plugs o' dynamite amongst them just to help them along. A shark at sea, a snake on shore, and a crooked pal are my idea o' hell's angels."

Very quickly Mac went ashore with his bos'n, a couple of the men, and Judy Hiscox. They were not on pleasure bent, their sole idea in landing was to get through with their business in the most expeditious manner possible. Mac had no qualms in leaving the vessel, dangerous as the weather was at that particular time of the year, because in his first and second officers he had a couple of capable men who knew the island and the weather to be met with there even better than he did himself. Still, it was an axiom with him that a skipper's place was aboard his ship excepting when real business interests were to be served by his going ashore, and as he knew personally the very best man in the pearl shell trade in Honolulu he thought it advisable to attend to that himself, whilst with regard to taking on the ship's stores he had realized by this time that he had a couple of very capable deputies in Judy Hiscox and the nigger cook, Moonshine.

Almost as soon as they landed they separated, each going upon his or her particular business. Just before they parted on land McGlusky remarked to Miss Judy:

"It is wi'in the bounds o' possibility, Miss Judy, that during your peregrinations through the township of Honolulu you may run across some white bounder who may be tempted by the sight o' your bonny face to be a wee bitty fresh, for amongst the class o' sailor men who trade in the islands there are some pretty tough characters, and ye may meet wi' a spot o' trouble from some blighter a bit under the weather from the drinks he has been taking on shore, but I'm thinking that as ye

hae the cook, Moonshine, wi' ye, ye'll be able to take care o' yoursel'."

Miss Judy threw back her head until her beautifully rounded throat, showing plainly above her open-worked bodice to the admiring eyes of Skipper McGlusky, laughed a full, rich, joyous laugh, ere she remarked:

"Come away from it, Skipper McGlusky. I know a bit more about these islands than you think, and let me tell you I've run up against tougher citizens in my time way back in camps in America than any I am likely to meet here. Anyhow," she added, with a meaning movement of her right hand to her hip, "I have a good companion always riding in my belt, and if any sea rowdie becomes too fresh with me I will show him in very short order that meddling with an American girl is not a pastime that pays."

As she ceased speaking, Moonshine, the nigger cook, throwing out his chest, exclaimed:

"No, sir, there sure is no white trash that will open his haid too wide to Miss Judy whilst Moonshine is around. If he do suah I will put that white trash up for general inspection fer de undertaker with this 'ere bowie knife."

McGlusky grinned, and said: "Well, looking at the pair of you, I do not think I need have any anxiety regarding your safety ashore, so I will get on with my work and try and make arrangements for a first-class consignment of pearl shells to lie between the hatches of the *Bonny Jean* early to-morrow."

As McGlusky swung away with his long, striding gait, with the bos'n trotting alongside of him on his dumpy legs, Moonshine remarked to Miss Judy from the position he had taken up, which was a respectful distance behind her:

"Our skipper is a mighty fine man, Miss Judy. He done think of everyone else before he thinks of himself."

Judy Hiscox swung her face round so she could speak to the darkey, of whom she had formed a very high estimate. Then said she:

"Skipper McGlusky is a first-class man to serve with, Moonshine. He's all man and no fancy frills."

The nigger chuckled heartily at this pithy utterance, and opened his mouth to make a characteristic reply, but a glance at the young woman's face made him think better of it, for there is no man living who understands better than a good, intelligent nigger, just how far he dares go with a white woman who is not white trash, and Miss Judy Hiscox certainly did not rank as white trash in the estimation of the good cook of the *Bonny Jean*.

The two went upon their business and carried it through with dispatch and success, and then still having a fair amount of time on their hands, they strolled around to see the sights, such as they were. In the township of Honolulu there was little to hold the attention, or to occupy the time of such seasoned folks as they were. The real glory and beauty of Honolulu lay in its natural loveliness. The foam breaking over the coral-encrusted reefs made a loveliness that beggared all description as the white foam, torn up by the teeth of the coral, mingling with the blue waters of the ocean left descriptive phrases beggared on the lips of sight-seers. Close in shore the palm trees waved their stately heads in rhythmical musical motion to the caressing touches of the whispering breezes, whilst the grass underneath lay lush and gorgeously green. There were plenty of other trees besides the palm, such as the bread fruit, the banana, and many another delicacy producing tree. Wild flowers grew in magnificent profusion, such flowers as would drive the keepers of florists' shops in the great cities of the world crazy with envy could they only see them.

Birds of gorgeous plumage flittered about, some fly-

ing silently, others waking the echoes with their unmelodious notes, and amidst this beauty of foliage and flower there roamed at that period the native element in all its natural loveliness, for the men of Honolulu were tall and slender and beautifully made, whilst the women and girls were things of unadulterated loveliness, and had not the negroid faces in the slightest degree, nor was their colour black. They were coloured like the beautiful bronze that one sees on the keel of a ship as it heels over to the touch of the wayward wind. For figures, the girls of Honolulu could rival anything in their beautiful shapeliness that the world could show, and their eyes were like the eyes of the houris that good Moslems expect to see when they enter their Paradise, though it was not of Heaven or Paradise that the sailor men who visited Honolulu got to thinking when they looked into the big, dreamy, love-laden eyes of the Honolulu maidens.

McGlusky knew every hole and corner in that island, for he had visited it many times, either out of curiosity when his pockets were full of money, or when at work on board ship, and he had many friends in that land of loveliness. Down by the beach the girls and women roamed about in a state of nature, and they filled in very much of their time surf riding, and it was one of their joys of existence to be tumbled about in the soft masses of foam-flung surf. There were no sharks to be feared on the landward side of the reefs, on which the waves dashed and tore themselves into mighty masses of iridescent bubbles which gave back the sunlight in countless myriads of colours. The men were also fond of the surf riding, but they were not nearly so addicted to it as were the threequarter-grown maidens, who would come hurtling on shore in the midst of a mass of white foam and be carried far up the shelving sand beach, as though they were mermaids. As their sun-tanned bodies were rolled over, and over and over on

the sand, they would make the welkin ring with the sound of their girlish laughter, and cries of pretended dismay.

When the bos'n and McGlusky walked amongst these damsels they did not display the faintest sign of false modesty. All their lives, from the moment when they first opened their eyes to the sun-lit world, they had been accustomed to walk amongst their own people as Eve walked before the Devil taught her to wear a fig leaf. There was no shame in their nudity because they had never learnt to blush because man could look at what nature had made. Men going amongst them for the first time from ships were apt to consider these maidens as brazen creatures who could be tempted to become toys of lust by bribes or cajolery. But they very soon found that they had to start their reckoning all over again when dealing with the Honolulu damsels, for taking them by and large, a more virtuous race of people never trod the earth. If they fell in love with the men who came to dwell for a space in their midst then they surrendered to them, but not for bribery; they had to be won by love, and they wooed and were wooed as the bright-hued birds did their courting.

In later years, when the Missionaries had overrun that glorious island and had compelled the Honolulu maidens to wear the cast-off clothing of white women which they had collected by Mission crusades in America, then vicious habits began to crop up amongst the maids of Honolulu. For as the Missionaries taught them to be ashamed of their bodies, they also taught the meaning of lustful wrongdoing, and the ruin of that wonderful race of natives soon became an accomplished fact.

McGlusky knew the ground too well to make the mistakes that new travellers so often do make. He knew that the coloured girls were chaste, and he treated them according to the standard of morality that existed

amongst them. He was in the centre of a dozen girls who between them did not have a sufficiency of clothing to have made a covering for a canary bird's nest, when he heard a voice behind him drawling:

"This surely is what I have read about as a pure pastoral scene."

As the notes of that voice fell upon his ear, McGlusky recognized it instantly as belonging to Judy Hiscox, and swinging round his eyes met those of the frontiers' woman that seemed to be full of flashing lights. Judy strolled over to McGlusky, a small, native cigar between her lips from which smoke curled upwards, and murmured to Mac:

"I sure understand, Skipper McGlusky, what was the business ashore so urgent and so pressing."

The sarcastic inflection in the frontiers' woman's voice seemed to sting McGlusky, for he answered with a certain amount of heat:

"Hold your horses, Miss Judy; you are over-riding the mark. I am no a plaster saint but if ye think that there's anything wrong between me and any yin o' these lassies you're a worse guesser than I imagined a woman o' your seeming broadmindedness would be. I'm thinking," he continued, "that the man who could live here and remain a celibate is too good for this wicked world, he has only backbone enough to produce butterflies or blue beetles. I'm no the sort," he added a moment later, "that considers he must behave himself like a man when dealing wi' white women but can cut loose and play up any devilment that suits his fancy amongst the native women. If ye had that thought o' me, why ye dinna lower me by thinking it, but ye mak' yoursel' a lot less worth the respect I had in my mind towards ye."

"Don't go off the deep end, Mac," replied Judy in level tones, though the colour that had mounted to her cheeks under his rebuke showed that she felt the rebuff both

in his tones and in his words. "I'm not thinking any the worse of you," she continued, "than I would think of ninety-nine men out of every hundred that have knocked about the world; it has been my experience of life in the raw that men take with both hands what they can grapple."

"There are men and men," grumbled McGlusky, "just as there are wummen and wummen." Then pausing; he pointed towards a native lass who was standing far enough down the beach for the last ripples of foam to play around her ankles, she was just as nature brought her into the world except that she was twining in her glossy locks, that reached down her back, a wreath of gloriously beautiful coral that had by some freak of fate been washed up by the waves right at her feet. Dressed in that coral chaplet and nothing else she faced round towards McGlusky that he might admire the gift that the sea gods had just thrown up to her, and McGlusky did look and looked his fill. Then, turning once again so that his eyes gripped Judy Hiscox's with all compelling power, he exclaimed:

"Look at yon lassie. She's no black, and she's no brown, but brown or black she's a dream o' loveliness. I wish Honolulu was a prison and she the jailer. I'd soon be bucking agin the law seeking for a life sentence."

Judy's lips curled mockingly as she listened to this pagan speech, and then she remarked in the cool drawl that she affected when she intended to sting anyone:

"And then, Skipper McGlusky, what would become of the *Bonny Jean* and our enterprise, eh?"

This rebuke seemed to bring McGlusky right down to earth and, shrugging his broad shoulders, he flung back an answer, saying:

"What I was saying concerning yon lassie standing there in all her naked loveliness, the wind rippling through her jet-black wavy hair, and the sunlight re-

flecting itself back from her wonderful, wonderful eyes, and the snow-white foam that curls around her feet matching the whiteness o' her teeth, was nothing but a form o' speech, what preachers call an illustration o' the subject under discussion. It didna mean that yon lassie could tempt me tae forsake the *Bonny Jean*, or to break ma plighted word to ye. I meant to convey the impression that these Honolulu lassies are not mere chattels to be bought and sold in the market o' men's desires, but something to be considered from a higher standpoint."

For quite a couple of minutes Judy Hiscox stood looking at the brawny adventurer standing just where the wavelets broke at his feet, and at last she threw back her head and laughed a rich, glorious, sensuous laugh that carried in it the wine of life.

"You're a queer deil," she snapped. "Every-one I spoke to about ye before I signed our contract told me that ye had as many corners to your character as there are in a whole block o' buildings."

Fortunately at that moment the bos'n provided a diversion that took all the asperity out of the dialogue between McGlusky and Judy Hiscox. The bos'n had been intrigued by the sight of the coral that the native girl had ransomed from the sea and had tucked away amongst her beautiful hair, and thrashing his way carefully through the water to her side he made overtures to her for its purchase. The dusky damsel, looking him over, laughed till her teeth looked like a string of pearls, then she smiled prettily, and plucking the coral from her hair she placed it in his hand, but refused the offer of the money that lay there. The bos'n who since coming ashore had looked into more than one drinking dive to wash the salt from his throat mistook the girl's cheery good nature for an amorous overture, and he wrapped one of his tremendous arms around her naked waist and, drawing her to him, kissed her full on the

mouth, and when she tried to wriggle and wrench herself free from his grasp he kissed her again and yet again, and all her attempts to break free were futile.

McGlusky, watching the encounter between the bos'n and the maid of Honolulu in the water, smiled grimly to himself, because he knew the nature of those damsels much better than did the bos'n, so he stood watching developments, knowing fairly well what lay in store for the amorous sailor. The struggle went on with semi-playfulness for quite a little while, McGlusky feeling sure in his own mind that the bos'n did not really intend more than rough house love-making. He stood watching. After the struggle had continued a few minutes, the girl found that she could not escape in spite of her sinuous movements, and almost snake-like writhing, and she began to grow tigerish as her outraged womanhood asserted itself, and at last she smacked the bos'n's face first with one hand and then with the other as hard as she was able to strike. But she might as well have smacked an oaken plank, for the bos'n's face was as hard as flesh and blood could be. A moment or two of this, and then she raised her voice in a peculiar native call, and then a grin dawned upon McGlusky's face that was a revelation in itself, for he knew the meaning of the maiden's cry.

The instant that call, ringing out from the lips of the girl, reached the ears of the dozens of native maidens who were disporting themselves in the surf nearby, they forsook their games and those that were swimming swam furiously towards the struggling pair, and the others who were ashore came racing at the top of their speed in answer to the girlish outcry. Like a pack of she wolves the dusky damsels threw themselves upon the bos'n, half a dozen clung to each arm and as many more as could get their hands around his legs seized him in that fashion, whilst others, putting their arms round his neck, did their level best to throttle him.

White teeth showing in real anger through dusky lips showed all round the bos'n, who now realized that he was in for more trouble than he had bargained for. He struggled with all his herculean strength, but his legs were dragged from under him, and his arms were stretched out at full length, and strive how he might he could not shake off the mass of clinging maidenhood.

He must have realized that he was in for some kind of punishment for his audacity in seizing and hugging a damsel of Honolulu against her will, but he was too much of a man at any time to make an attempt to strike at any of his assailants, but he certainly was not a niggard in the use of his strength in his attempts to set himself free, but the harder he struggled and strained the more he found himself enmeshed, and at last, much to his rage and indignation, he was hoisted high and dragged out into the deep surf, where he was ducked, and ducked, and ducked again until, powerful fellow though he was, he must have been pretty nearly half drowned, and when at last the virgins had satisfied their lust for revenge and allowed him to go, he was so full of sea water that he hardly had room for sufficient air to keep his lungs from bursting.

He was reeling in the shallow water as he ploughed his heavy way towards the land, and the way his chest rose and fell in his attempts to gain his breath told McGlusky that the mighty bos'n had received a baptism in the brine that would teach him for the future not to take liberties with the Honolulu virgins. When the bos'n had reached the sandy shore, where the sun had burnt everything under foot to a state of delicious warmth, he flung himself down and lay there, kicking and squirming, and belching for quite a long time. Then McGlusky went to him, saying:

"Well, bos'n, I think you've had a much-needed lesson to-day. These girls are not murderously inclined as they are on many of these islands, but I can tell you

this, my lad, that if you had attempted to take the same liberties with that damsel away amongst the coconut groves instead of in the water, where they could duck you, the handling you would have received would have been of a much more serious nature. Let this be a warning to you, at all events as long as you are sailing under my command, and remember this, I will allow no liberties of that sort on the part of any member of my crew. If you can find a wench willing to meet you half way, either you or any of the rest of the men aboard the *Bonny Jean*, why then everything is up to you and the girl, but such buccaneering tactics as you attempted won't go down with Jamie McGlusky, for if the girls had not man-handled you, by the Lord that made me I would."

"I only meant to kiss the wench for sport, Skipper. I may be rough but I'm not the sort that commits an outrage on any woman, no matter what her colour may be."

"I believe you, my lad," responded Mac, "so we'll let it go at that," and he added, "it's a thundering good job for you that I do believe you."

CHAPTER V

CHING HOW ARRIVES

AFTER the bos'n had received his lesson in good manners, he remained for some little time in a chastened mood, but the natural manliness of the fellow soon asserted itself, and he remarked with a whimsical wag of his big head to his skipper:

"Say, sir, if all the girls of all the world only handled men the way those copper-coloured wenches handled me for stealing a few kisses, why, men would come to women with much more respect than they do now. I only got what I asked for."

"It did not strike me that way, bos'n," retorted the skipper with a whimsical quirk at his lips, and a humorous twinkle in his eyes. "I didn't think that you got what you were asking for at all, but by the Lord that made me, you got what you darned well deserved."

The bos'n knew that when he was ashore he could take liberties with this skipper of his that he would never have dared to take when aboard ship. So, looking up slyly into the strong face of the *Bonny Jean's* skipper, he said:

"Never steal a kiss from a wench, eh, Skipper?"

"Thousands of 'em," chuckled Mac, "but I took darned good care not to have a bunch of Amazons round, or enough water near to duck me in. I'd just like you to understand, boy," he continued, speaking in the kindly manner that was part of his method towards his crew. "I just want the *Bonny Jean's* crew to be respected in all these islands; it may happen that we shall

be running for our lives before we are very much older on the job that I am going to put through, and if we have friends in all the islands it may mean all the difference between liberty and the inside of a Japanese jail for us at the finish, so watch your steps, lad, in future and treat what you've got to-day as something you bought and paid for by your own darned foolishness. Now you can go and shake a leg on your own account; I'm going to call on some old friends of mine, and see to it that you don't get up to any foolishness that may bring the *Bonny Jean's* crew into disrepute with the natives."

The friend of Skipper McGlusky was the chief of the native tribe that owned the Island of Honolulu, and he had found that the head-man had been friendly when he had put in some months with him as his guest on a previous occasion. That night the chief, in McGlusky's honour, organized what was known as a hulu dance. The moon was at its full; nowhere in creation's good world does the moon look quite so gloriously beautiful as it does in the Pacific Islands. It seemed to come closer to the sea, and its influence on the natives' minds is a well proven and long accepted fact. Long before the moon had swung well overhead, the hulu dance was being organized, and Mac found himself sitting next to the chief, cross legged on the grass amongst the beautiful palm trees with an open space of grass land in front of them. All around this place native men and women stood, and Mac noticed that whilst the men were as naked as Adam was when he started his courtship with Mother Eve, the women and girls all wore what might very easily have passed for a nightgown that reached midway between the knee and the ankle, and left a goodly amount of shoulder and bosom and arm bare. Round each waist a band of ribbon some two inches wide was bound, each sash was the favourite colour of the woman, or damsel, who wore it.

Before the dance the musicians of the tribe filed in, some twenty in number playing their reed instruments, and a kind of zither that was native to the island. This music was familiar to McGlusky, and he was fond of it for it reminded him of nothing so much as the music which generally accompanies the melodies of the great Irish poet, Tom Moore, and Tom Moore's melodies were amongst McGlusky's principal musical favourites. Round and round the open space the musicians tramped, shuffling their feet to keep time to the rhythm of the melody they were producing, and this went on for the better part of an hour, McGlusky and the chief and the rest of the men enjoying themselves smoking and chatting over old times as they waited for the dancers. At last, with a great flourish, the musicians marched off the scene, and a band of a couple of dozen lassies put in an appearance. Each lass had her hair filled and braided with wild flowers, and with choice pieces of beautiful coral. Each wore a white garment, the same as the spectators amongst the women were wearing, and each damsel had on her scarf, and in this fashion they began to dance beautifully round and round the enclosure, linking fingers whilst their nimble feet carried them gaily over the grass, and as they danced they sang, and they were singing the same plaintive strains that were so reminiscent of Tom Moore's Irish Melodies.

A few moments later the dancers lined up in front of that portion of the ground where McGlusky and the chief men of the tribe were sitting cross legged smoking the pipe of peace; they were preparing to dance the far-famed hulu dance which was unique in its way. Each maiden stood with feet about three inches apart, and with a movement that was almost unanimous, each girl removed the sash of coloured ribbon from her waist and waved her arms high over her head, with the ribbon held most daintily between the first finger

and the thumb of each hand. In the brilliant moonlight this display of many coloured ribbons was very effective especially when the girls moved with rhythmic motions in time to the chanting which broke from their lips. At a signal from the leader of the troop each lassie began to move her body in all kinds of sinuous motions whilst the feet remained perfectly still. To be absolutely candid, the hulu is not a dance at all, as far as Europeans understand the term. Their arms and hands remained motionless, their legs from the thighs downwards might have been carved out, of bronze, but their bodies, especially their hips, were in an eternity of movement, writhing, turning, twisting and curling, they appeared as if they had not a muscle but had been turned into living snakes, and every muscle was writhing in a manner that would have made the ordinary European contortionist green with envy, and all the time the brilliant moonbeams played over the statuesque bodies.

It is claimed by tourists who have travelled the islands that the hulu dance is nothing more or less than trained movements brought into being to create amorous desires. To McGlusky it seemed the manifestation of the perfection of muscular control. No prize fighter who ever entered the roped arena ever had such muscular development over the abdominal portion of his body, and yet a moment after the dance had ceased the girls moved around, and as far as the eyes of the onlookers could ascertain there was not a sign or a trace of muscle on their sleek, slender bodies. When the girls, snatching up their pretty white garments, which they donned with supple grace and skill, tripped out of the arena, the applause from the spectators mustering in their hundreds amongst the palm trees was both loud and long.

At the close of the dance, McGlusky, bidding adieu to his friend, the chief, strolled off alone towards that

portion of the island where the shopping centre lay, and at last found himself in front of a drinking caboose, and as he felt the urge for a little liquid entertainment he entered the place, and was not altogether surprised to see his bos'n there sampling the contents of a black bottle that stood on a small table in front of him. A look of intelligence passed swiftly between McGlusky and the bos'n, and the latter understood from the glance that his skipper had given him that he was to continue his solo drinking without appearing to be on terms of acquaintance with the skipper. Amongst the patrons of the caboose were two or three Japanese, several Chinamen and quite a number of European sailors, mostly Australians and Americans. Dice boxes were rattling wickedly at almost every one of the small tables that were scattered over the large caboose, and where the dice boxes were not making music, playing cards were strongly in evidence. McGlusky loved a gamble when the spirit moved him to take part in a game of chance, but for the time being for this night he preferred to be an onlooker. His eyes roved from one little group of men to another in search of some familiar face, and rather to his astonishment he failed to see a man whom he knew. This was a rare event with McGlusky, who had in his time touched almost every centre of trade amongst the islands and consequently knew, and was known to a huge number of adventurers who forgathered in the pleasure resorts such as the one in which he now found himself. He had not been sitting very long ere a soft-footed, slender-figured Chinese boy came up and in pidgin English demanded his attention, saying:

"Master, you wantee anything, wantee drink, sir?"

He was a handsome-faced youngster, this Chinaman, and McGlusky, who was a perfect whale for information, engaged the yellow-faced waiter in conversation in the pidgin dialect in which no man was a greater master

than he. Most of his talk was a kind of humorous leg pulling, because he knew that when the Chinese possess a merry heart they are amongst the most sociable humans in existence, and there is nothing that they appreciate more than a conversation with a European of good standing, though it is a noticeable trait in their character that, though they are the tillers of the soil and hewers of wood and drawers of water all over the white world, they will never condescend to hold any kind of conversation whatever with dead beats and beach combers who are of course amongst the derelicts of the white races.

This lad whom McGlusky engaged in converse was a keen-witted youngster and very quick on the uptake, and in answer to a half joking query put to him by the *Bonny Jean's* skipper concerning the Japanese present, the Chinaman gave him swiftly to understand that even if he was yellow, and he was unquestionably an Asiatic, he had very little use if any for the Japanese.

"Jappy man alee time makee trouble," he announced. "Chinee boy," he added, "likee makee money, no wantee makee trouble."

"Well," answered McGlusky, "I believe you're speaking the truth now, my pagan friend. You Chinese are content to make money, and you don't mind working jolly hard to do so, whilst the Japs are, as you say, eternally looking for trouble."

Having obtained his drink and a cigar, Mac sat back and enjoyed himself watching the faces of the gamblers of all nationalities and drawing his own conclusions from what he saw. Growing tired of this form of amusement, Mac rose and was strolling out of the place when the Chinese boy who had waited upon him slipped past him through the doorway and wished him a civil good night, to which Mac responded in like manner, because it was always a maxim of the big fellow's that courtesy and civility are never wasted com-

modities in the world's commerce. As his long legs carried the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* with lazy speed along the thoroughfare which led to a palm grove on the seaward side, he noticed the fluttering garments of the Chinese boy in the bright moonlight far ahead of him. Just as the yellow lad reached the fringe of the trees a number of men sprang out upon him and a squeal of terror broke from the Chinaman, for the odds against him were overwhelming.

It was never a way of McGlusky to mix up in brawls that are of hourly occurrence in similar places, but he was not the kind of man to see any pilgrims done to death by a crowd, and breaking into a run, he charged straight down upon the number of foot-pads who had attacked the yellow boy. Mac did not stand upon ceremony, but kicked the first one he came to, and kicked him so hard that if he had wanted more of the same kind he must have been born a hog. Not pausing one solitary second, Mac shot out his left hand and it landed on the neck of another one, and the foot-pad went smashing against a palm tree, from which he recoiled with terrific violence, and almost at the same second Mac hurled his right fist into the stomach of a third foot-pad, and the recipient of that blow loosed a wailing yelp that must have reached upwards to the stars. The rest of the gang broke and fled, though *en passant* one of them made a slash with a knife at Mac that inflicted a three-inch gash on his left forearm. Mac went in pursuit of this fellow, but he soon realized that he had not the chance of a fish in a flour barrel of catching up with him, for not only was the foot-pad very, very fast upon his feet, but he evidently knew how to travel amongst timber, for the way he dodged in and out of the tall palms would have done credit to a scared rabbit. As Mac paused and glared vengefully after the fleeing ruffian, he muttered:

"Whatever the rest of you were, you at any rate are

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"Whatever the rest of you were, you at any rate are

a native, I'd swear to that; no white trash could travel amongst the tall timber as you are travelling. Ye've gied me a taste o' your knife. Weel, weel, I'm expecting that if I hadna interfered ye would hae gied the same, only worse, to the Chinese boy whom ye cowards were bent on robbing."

Picking his way back to the scene of the fracas, he was astonished to find the Chinese boy waiting for him. Without any ceremony, McGlusky, stripping off his coat and rolling up his shirt sleeve, commanded the yellow youth to bind up his wound, which though not very deep, was severe enough to cause the blood to run in a thick stream, and McGlusky was a very particular man in regard to his clothes; he was never finically dressed, but the material he wore was ever of the best that was in harmony with his work and surroundings. "Good, but no gaudy," was ever his order to his tailor. He'd haggle like sin over the price, and get full value, both in regard to quality, cut and fit, but once he struck a bargain his cash was planked down on the nail, for he hated to owe aught to any man. The yellow boy proved to be an adept at such work, and in spite of the nerve-trying events he had just passed through, he worked quickly and coolly on Skipper McGlusky's wound.

"Not the first time you've tended a wound, my son," remarked the skipper when the job was finished. To the big fellow's amazement, the Chinese made reply in sound English, with an American accent, instead of in the pidgin dialect he had been previously using.

"No, Honourable Sir," he replied, "I have American college training with knowledge of wounds, and have passed exams in medicine."

"The devil you have," came the quick retort, "then what are you doing acting as serving boy in a Honolulu drinking dive, eh?"

"The Exalted One," answered the Chinese, "knows

that Chinese students learn many things good at American College, and many other things not so good; me, I learnt to play poker and lost my patrimony, which was not large but—my all. With this disgrace there was no return to China for me. I had, Honourable Gentleman, lost my face—so I came to Honolulu hoping to make money by getting into the pearl trade, but that took time for this dull one had to earn capital, and save it. From poker, Exalted One, I have learnt much since I came to Honolulu that I had not learnt at college."

McGlusky grinned ere answering: "We are never too old to learn at poker, and never too clever, so you made money at cards, eh, in the dive you work at?"

"The Exalted One is gifted with imagination," purred Ching How, for such was the name of the sleek young pagan, with a Christian education.

"Perhaps," hazarded Mac after a pause, "it was some friend of yours on whom you had been experimenting at poker who tried to undo your anatomy with knives to-night."

"The So Wise One is wrong about the cards this time; it was not poker that caused the trouble to-night. This is the third time I have been attacked, and the fourth time may be unlucky; but it is not right to keep the So Estimable One standing whilst this foolish one's troubles are explained. If the Great One will condescend to walk to the hut of Quong Sioue-e-e, where this unwise one has residence, this so stupid one will explain many things that may be of value even to one so exalted."

Mac let a peculiar whistle trill from between his teeth. "Quong Sioue-e-e," he murmured, "do you mean to say that you live with that old devil doctor, eh?"

The Chinese nodded his head emphatically in the moonlight ere answering:

"With the native magician, Quong Sioue-e-e, my so humble presence is accepted at a price agreed upon per week."

"Well," riposted Mac, "this night has unloaded a few surprises on me, but this is the greatest."

He paused, and then walking by the Chinaman's side, continued:

"For years I have been hearing mysterious tales about this half-bred Chinese by a native woman; tales that take an almighty lot of swallowing, but though I have tried high and low to meet this Quong Sioue-e-e, I have always failed for some unknown or unexplained reason, but if a millionth part of what I have heard concerning him be true tales, I wouldn't lodge under his roof for a packet of pearls with a gold mine thrown in."

"Quong Sioue-e-e good friend, bad enemy," riposted Ching How, "you come see him with me, he perhaps tell the Great One something that may save him from trouble in time to come."

"He didn't save you from trouble to-night, Ching How," chuckled McGlusky. The yellow man made a clicking noise against his teeth with his tongue ere he exclaimed in answer:

"Perhaps he did, Exalted One, perhaps it was Quong Sioue-e-e who willed the Great One to come to the help of this unimportant one."

"Well," chirruped McGlusky good humouredly, "that is one way of looking at things, now tell me as we walk along what do you really know of this Quong Sioue-e-e?"

"I have known him ever since this so undeserving one came first to Honolulu, Honourable Gentleman. This uninteresting one who wastes the Great One's time with his talk was just starting in the employ of the same dive when one night when the place was full of natives, Japs, Chinese, and half a dozen Australian men, Quong Sioue-e-e looked in, and standing still in

the middle of the dive, he stood pointing his hand at two Japanese and one white sailor man and a native boy, and the Honourable Gentleman must believe me when I swear that this be true story, sworn to by the grave of my revered father in China, one by one those men whom Quong Sioue-e-e had pointed his finger at dropped forward in their chairs with their faces on the table, and the servants who rushed to them to pick them up saw they were lying with their eyes wide open looking like glass. White doctor was sent for and he said that the three men had died of fits, but with all his knowledge he could find no cause for those fits; they were dead men."

"What had become of the devil doctor, Quong Sioue-e-e, in the meantime?" demanded McGlusky.

"No one," replied Ching How, "saw the devil doctor leave the place. One moment he was standing there in full view of all present, right in the middle of the room, the next he was not, that is all; he did not walk out, he did not fly out, he simply was not, that is all."

"So," remarked McGlusky, "that was your first introduction to Quong Sioue-e-e, was it? Well, I must say it wasn't a bad introduction; can you tell me anything else about this old wizard?"

"I could," came the ready answer, "tell the Honourable Gentleman stories which could begin at the beginning of a week and would not be ended when the week had passed into nothingness. But we are now near to his hut and I will not talk more. I am a friend of Quong Sioue-e-e's," he whispered, when they had marched a few paces further on, "and any visitor to the hut as my friend will be welcome. As for myself, Honourable Gentleman, as long as I am under Quong Sioue-e-e's roof, I am safe from a hundred murderers, for not one man in the whole of Honolulu would dare to come here and raise a hand against me. If he did,

Quong Sioue-e-e would put a spell on them that would blow out their lives like the blowing out of a candle."

"You really believe that?" queried Mac.

"But yes, Honourable Sir, why should not one so stupid believe what he himself has seen and witnessed?"

"All right," said Mac, "go right in and I'll follow at your heels. I'll try any old thing once."

As he spoke he happened to raise his eyes and to glance seawards, and saw the *Bonny Jean* riding at anchor in the moonlit night, and somehow or another the sight reassured him and awakened all his old buoyancy of disposition. He was astounded when Ching How opened the door of the hut by merely pulling a piece of loose string that hung down from the wooden latch, and pushed open the door with his knee, calling out as he did so in the native dialect that it was he, Ching How, and a white Honourable Gentleman whom he was hoping to have the honour of presenting to the greatest devil doctor. Mac did not talk the Honolulu dialect fluently himself, but he had a good working knowledge of it, and could understand anything that was said clearly in that tongue on hearing it. A voice answered, bidding him come in and accept the hospitality of the owner. It was the voice of an aged man but a full, strong and resonant voice.

Not a little astonished when entering the thatched roof cabin, he saw by the light of a flare that was caused by a coconut shell half filled with oil, with a rough cotton wick alight in its centre, an enormous figure of a man stretched on a bed of dried grass in one corner of the hut, a man with hair whiter than the driven snow, the cheeks were hollowed out and sunken by the fingers of extreme old age, but if the cheeks were sunken and the big mouth fangless, a pair of brilliant eyes that seemed to be sunk half way back into the head of the giant were ablaze with the electricity of

vital force and intellectual power, and as those eyes fell upon his own, Mac felt an uncanny thrill run through his frame. The young Chinaman dropped completely out of the picture for a time, as far as McGlusky was concerned, at any rate. The iron-jawed Britisher sat looking with concentrated brain power straight into the blazing eyes that held him for a time with a basilisk gaze.

In a moment McGlusky realized that the devil doctor was possessed of a terrific magnetic force, but in that respect Mac also knew his own power, and did not flinch from the ordeal that was being forced upon him by the giant who had now raised himself to one elbow, whilst his glittering eyes bored into those of the sailor. Many times in the course of his adventurous life McGlusky had tested his own powers of will against the hypnotic gifts of men in India, China, Arabia, and in fact over a very great part of the world, and he had not a shadow of doubt in his own subconscious mind concerning his will power to overcome anything in the shape of hypnotism that might be brought to bear upon him. He had heard and read much concerning mass hypnotism but had no belief in it, because in all his travels he had never known even two persons to be hypnotized at the same time. For quite a time the duel of wills went on, and then slowly, but surely, the fiercely glittering light in the eyes of the devil doctor began to dim as though the electric torch within his brain had been slowly, but surely, turned down. At last, when the eyes into which he gazed seemed nearly normal to McGlusky, he permitted himself to relax slightly, and he drew a deep chest breath, and as he did so the fiercely concentrated expression on the golden brown face in front of him relaxed, and something that might have been a half smile seemed to dawn around the cavernous mouth, then in a moment the ancient dealer in mysteries began to speak in perfectly comprehensible Eng-

lish, and he cross-questioned McGlusky stringently in regard to his purpose in visiting the hut that night. Mac was straightforward with him, saying:

"Quong Sioue-e-e, I have for many years sought an opportunity of meeting you, but have been denied that pleasure until a chance meeting with the Chinese boy in the woods to-night led to him bringing me here."

As Mac ceased speaking, the leonine face of the wizard was pushed forward in Mac's direction, and in a voice that had something of the lion's growl in its tones, the devil doctor said to him:

"Are you sure, white man, that it was what you call chance caused you to meet Ching How, the Chinaman, when he was greatly in need of your presence?"

"It seemed chance to me," replied McGlusky off-handedly. "All I know about it is that I was strolling carelessly along, and in the moonlight saw a number of skulkers attacking a lone man, and naturally I went forward to help the man, who was battling against long odds."

"You say 'naturally' you went," remarked Quong Sioue-e-e. "It was natural for you because you are of a breed of men who count danger as a plaything, but there were other forces at work in your brain, forces that you do not perhaps believe in, none the less they exist."

"What forces are you referring to?" Mac shot that query at his interlocutor forcefully.

"The forces I speak of," came the deep-throated answer, "were my will forces; lying here in my hut I was thinking of the Chinese youth because by the power that is mine I had sensed that he was in danger, and using my magic I soon discovered where the danger for him lay, and I also came in touch with your presence and I willed you to rush to the assistance of the young man. You did not need any urging from me

because it is part of your nature to do as you did. You have been in many places of danger during your existence and will pass through many more, but this necklace of protection I put around you."

As he ceased speaking, the giant, whose hair was like driven snow, suddenly rose upright with a bound that would have done credit to a young man in the full glory of his athletic manhood, and stretching out his hand which held a long wand, the magician drew a circle in the air around the head of McGlusky, and as he did so he growled in a voice so vibrant that it seemed to make the air tremulous:

"May sand fill the eyes of all your enemies and adders creep into the holes of their ears."

A good many men of the adventurous type would have grinned sardonically, or at least would have treated such a speech coming from such a source rather contemptuously. But McGlusky had seen so many strange happenings in his wild and wayward existence that he had grown broad minded, and whilst he did not accept as truth everything that came his way, yet he never turned a strange happening down with contempt because it was something beyond his own knowledge, as self-conceited fools will do. Looking up at the gigantic figure, he half rose and made a gesture in the native fashion that betokened his respectful gratitude for the blessing given. The devil doctor accepted the courteous gesture and the words that accompanied it in the spirit Mac had intended he should receive it, and after pausing a moment the devil doctor continued saying:

"I will not say to you, as I would say to many men, 'Peace rest on your eyelids,' for to such a man as you peace would not be happiness, it would be torment."

"You either know me better than I know myself," smiled McGlusky, "or you are an almighty good guesser, for to me what men define as peace would mean

not rest but rust, and as long as there is life in me I will not rust."

The gigantic wizard kept his eyes full and steadily on the white man's rugged face, and at last spoke, saying:

"You will most surely have that wish to the ending of your days. Not only will you know much of danger and of strife, but though you will know many pleasant paths, yet you will eat your fill of the bread of bitterness and drink of the cup of torments."

After he had finished this sentence, the devil doctor sat himself down cross legged and intimated that he was ready for a pow-wow if such was the wish of the white man, so McGlusky immediately put the question to him, saying:

"How is it when I arrived here first with the Chinese boy you talked to us in the native dialect as though you were native-born?"

"I spoke to you in that manner because," replied Quong Sioue-e-e, "the language of Honolulu is native to my tongue. I was born here, raised here, my father was a Chinese, my mother a native woman."

"How do you come to speak English as perfectly as I do myself?" queried McGlusky as he loaded his pipe and tossed his tobacco pouch into the lap of the wizard.

"I speak English because in the days of my boyhood there was, here in Honolulu, an English mission school. That was before the Americans got to what they call 'civilizing' the natives. The English mission taught Christianity, and they educated all of us who would sit at their feet and learn of their knowledge. Young as I was, I knew that knowledge spells power, and so I became a devout student, though of their Christianity I would believe just enough to satisfy my own purposes. I felt too much the influence of the Chinese blood that ran in my veins for me to fall in love with a religion

that was as new as the Christian Faith is. I learnt in later years by intercourse with the Chinese people a good deal of the faith of Confucius, and I could have adopted that as my religion much easier than I could have accepted the faith of the Christians. But it was not for me to adopt either faith. I had the South Sea nature as well as the South Sea blood of my mother in my being, and I learnt the law of what you white people term witchcraft from one of the greatest men who ever lived in this part of the world, and I have gathered knowledge that makes me smile at the miracles that the Christian people think so highly of. Do not think that I am talking merely for the sake of using idle words, for words that are only wind may sound big in the ears of a boastful one, but they carry little weight with people who have power to think for themselves."

"Will you," demanded McGlusky, "give me here and now some proof of the powers that you say you possess? I am not asking out of idle curiosity; I am a student of such matters and know that there are many things in heaven and earth that mock at the teachings learnt at the white men's schools. If it is a matter of a reward," he added, "I will pay it with pleasure."

"The reward," interrupted Quong Sioue-e-e, "has already been paid by the big white man when he came to the rescue of the Chinese boy at the risk of his own life; sit still just as you are now sitting and I will work magic that may be helpful to you in the future."

So McGlusky sat hugging his knees with both hands and pulling at his pipe reflectively, whilst the Chinese boy, Ching How, sitting a bit away on his right hand, nursed his hands in the opposite sleeve of his loose-fitting jacket as was a habit of his always. For quite a time McGlusky sat looking, not too fixedly, yet intently, into space. All at once a light glimmering as of a white sheet, appeared at the far end of the cabin right behind the spot where the big half-caste magician lay

sprawled. Some little time passed before anything occurred to rivet the attention of the sailor, but shortly there appeared a picture which he could not fail to recognize as the sea line right in front of Honolulu. It was as if a magic lantern slide had thrown upon a screen a portrait taken by one of the many missionaries and tourists who had photographed that lovely spot.

In a few seconds he was seeing quite as plainly as though he were looking at it in reality, the picture of his ship, the *Bonny Jean*, riding at anchor, and for an instant McGlusky's analytical mind beginning to work, caused him to chuckle soundlessly as the thought flashed through his brain: "This is not magic, it is this devil doctor's power of operating on the subconscious mind of one who is sitting with him as I am sitting." Continuing this train of reasoning, Mac murmured to his own soul:

"Nothing more natural than that this old chap should hit upon a portrait of my ship to work a picture on the eyes of my mind and so convey it to my brain."

But Mac's complacency was shattered a moment later when, on the deck of the *Bonny Jean* he saw, as clearly as he had ever seen her in life, the face and figure of Judy Hiscox, sprawling at ease in a deck chair, whilst standing beside her, evidently enjoying himself very much, was the second mate. Mac realized at once that this could be no mere delusion worked up from the imaginings of his own subconscious mind, because he had never seen Judy Hiscox familiar with either of his officers, and it did not cause him any too much pleasure to see the familiarity of the officer's attitude as he bent over the recumbent girl.

"Darn his hide," muttered McGlusky, "if I ever see anything of that sort in real life I'll take a fall out of his conceit and put him in his place almighty quickly."

A moment later the whole picture of the *Bonny Jean* was wiped out as though a sponge had been passed over

a screen and rubbed it from observation. Almost instantaneously another picture filled his eyes. It was the portrait of an ancient iron sea tramp, a vessel so rusty and dirty, and weather and age worn, that the wonder was that she could be kept afloat at all. Her sides and decks were red with rust and there had very evidently not been a coat of paint upon her for a generation. She looked a perfect derelict, a thing of the past, one of those vessels that went paddling about the world of waters without being able to raise a dollar's worth of insurance for their age-old carcasses. She was not of very great tonnage, but could have carried a useful consignment of trade cargo from one island to another.

Standing close to her ancient steering gear was a nigger sailor man dressed in nothing but a pair of what had long before been white pants, and nothing else. He was not a native of the islands but an African negro, and his features and figure were of the caliban type. Close to this aged mariner, whose curly wool was bleached nearly white, stood a big sailor man, powerfully built, deep-chested, long-bodied, and his one good leg was short, the other was wooden from the knee downwards. On the head of this image was perched a semi-sailor cap, and it was worn at such a rakish angle that the wonder was it kept upon his head at all; in all probability it would not have remained in place if it had not been kept from slanting right off his head by one of his enormous ears. The instant McGlusky's eyes fell upon the face of this white officer, for officer he unquestionably was, though his garments were very little better than those of the caliban at the wheel, in regard to acquaintance with soap and water, McGlusky emitted the trill-like whistle through his teeth that was with him a habit when surprised, and muttered:

"If that's not old Skipper Starboard, then I'm either . . .

drunk or deluded, it's old Jo Starboard for a million, and that crazy old iron tub of his, the *Dirty Jane*. God only knows how it has managed to hang together in spite of wind and weather so long."

As he brushed his hand over his eyes to clear his vision, the picture slowly faded from his view and he growled to himself, as his way was:

"I'll be hanged, drawn and quartered, if that's a piece of imagery drawn from my subconscious mind. I haven't given old Jo and that steam kettle of his a thought for the last five years, though once upon a time we were the greatest of pals."

After that exhibition of his magic powers, Quong Sioue-e drew picture after picture on his invisible screen until McGlusky fairly gasped with unutterable amazement. He saw the *Bonny Jean* at the very port in Japan that it was his intention to visit, he saw swiftly drawn pictures of life in the Land of the Chrysanthemum, then he saw his vessel, the *Bonny Jean*, stealing out of the Japanese port with all lights out, as though making a surreptitious getaway, and not far behind her he saw the ghostly outline of a Japanese ship of war moving in pursuit stealthily with her decks cleared for action. This picture, like all the others, disappeared with magical speed, to be followed by one in mid-ocean with the *Bonny Jean* running before a tremendous gale, still followed by the ghostly Jap ship of war, and then for a space there was nothing but a blank, and then one more picture put in an appearance.

It was the out-line of the coast-line of an island that McGlusky had never in his life looked upon, an island right up on the borders of the Arctic circle, and in an indent rode the same old iron derelict of the seas which was known to all the sailor men in the Pacific as the *Dirty Jane*, Skipper Starboard's unsavoury craft, and whilst McGlusky took in every detail of that well-known vessel, he saw, running towards it at tremendous

speed, the *Bonny Jean*, and he himself was in command, whilst not far away in the wake of the *Bonny Jean* came gliding the ghostly figure of the Jap ship of war. That was the last of the amazing sequence of pictures that Quong Sioue-e produced for the edification of his white guest. When the pictorial show ceased, a silence fell upon the cabin, so intense that it could have been cut with a sword, and it was only broken when McGlusky said:

"W-e-e-I, Quong Sioue-e-e, I have heard much concerning your powers, but this beats all I ever heard, and when I return to the haunts where sailor men and world travellers forgather, they will tap their foreheads with their fingers and wink at one another, and in all probability say behind my back: 'Weel, either Jamie McGlusky is the biggest lear that God ever put the breath o' life into or else he has joined the great army of the dafties that are afloat in the world.'"

Quong Sioue-e-e replied to this outburst, saying:

"Men who stay by their own firesides see little and learn less; what does it matter what they say, or what they think? The material they think with is of too coarse and common a kind to amount to anything in the consideration of sensible men."

After a pleasant talk with Quong Sioue-e-e, McGlusky took his departure and made straight for the shore where lay a large-sized canoe which some native fishermen were just hauling on shore, and got himself canoed out to the *Bonny Jean*. The dawn was breaking as Mac clambered with strength and agility up the side of the vessel that he had already begun to learn to love. Early as it was, he saw Judy Hiscox walking briskly up and down the deck with her head carried high and the wind blowing her hair back behind her shoulders briskly in the teeth of the breeze. Mac's first idea as soon as he had swiftly saluted Miss Judy was to walk to the lee side and to sweep the sea with his eyes

to see if there was any sign of Skipper Starboard or the *Dirty Jane*, but it was empty of any such craft. Several schooners were anchored there, and as McGlusky ran his eyes over them he exclaimed to Judy:

"I'm hoping, Miss Judy, that one of those schooners has my pearl shells aboard, for I don't like hanging about here an hour longer than I absolutely must."

As he was making his way to his own cabin below, the "cook Moonshine greeted him with a grin that seemed to come perilously close to cracking his face in half, then:

"Mawnin', sah," drawled the nigger, and the soft pleasant voice was as melody in the ears of the skipper.

"Yo's early this mawnin', sah," continued the nigger with a rich chuckle running through his words, "but somehow I was expecting yo'd be back from shore at de first sound o' bird music among de trees, and I'se got a breakfas' ready for you, sah, that would tempt de angel Gabriel to leave off hunting sinners, an' come and sit down and feed his self."

"Right-ho, Moonshine, I'm not the angel Gabriel nor anyone belonging to his entourage, but I've brought an appetite aboard that would do duty to that breakfast of yours, so bring it on the run, bring it on the run, my lad."

As soon as the breakfast was over, Mac went on deck, only to find all the hands hanging over the lee rail watching a craft that was edging and inching its way through the reefs, and as McGlusky saw it the second officer, who was nearest to him, cried:

"Here comes old Skipper Starboard trying to thread a way through the reefs towards the shore, and I'll be darned if it's not the old iron kettle, the *Dirty Jane*, he's driving and at the wheel is his nigger, who he swears knows every reef, charted and uncharted, in the Pacific, and there are three or four of his native crew clambering on deck from the belly of the *Dirty Jane*."

To the day he died, the second officer of the *Bonny Jean* never forgot the look of unutterable amazement that he saw dawn on the face of Skipper McGlusky as that adventurer's eyes ranged over the incoming iron ship. Speaking of it to the first officer a little later, he said:

"By the thunder of Jove, when I saw the skipper's face I thought at first he was going to have a fit, then wondered if he had anything on his conscience with regard to old Skipper Starboard or any of the crew, for Skipper McGlusky stood there gaping as though a ghost had risen from the sea."

If that second mate of the *Bonny Jean* had only known it, it was a ghost that McGlusky was looking at, the ghost, or rather the substance of the picture he had looked upon in the hut of Quong Sioue-e-e on the previous night. A couple of hours later as Mac, who had gone aboard the *Dirty Jane* as soon as she had dropped anchor, rose to leave the cabin, and as he clasped hands with the skipper, he said:

"I think that we understand each other perfectly now, eh, old man; you and I have done plenty of business together in the past, and we know each other as square dealers. A leopard may change its spots, but a square man will never turn rogue with a pal. No, sir, not till stokers in hell wear pink whiskers."

The old captain of the *Dirty Jane* stood wringing McGlusky's hand whilst he looked the big fellow straight in the eyes and said in reply to the latter's last speech:

"I'm an Englishman, Mac, and you're an Australian, full to the brim with Scotch blood, but we are neither of us of the kind that ever goes back on a pal, no, sir; I'd sooner face hell with its trousers off than I'd break my word to you or any other good fellow."

Mac laughed at the quaintness of the old sailor man's

speech, and as he wheeled to leave the untidy but cosy cabin, he flung over his shoulder:

"Remember, old Sea Cock, that we will meet somewhere near the island I have named to you up on the edge of the Arctic. You be on the look out for me, and I'll keep my eyes skinned for you and the *Dirty Jane*. I can't make a closer appointment than that simply because I do not know anything for sure myself, but we who understand the ways of the sea know how to pick each other up all in good time, so each of us will keep a frozen mouth, remembering that the Japs have spies of all colours and of all kinds in all the islands, and we must guard our secret well."

A short, almost savage laugh broke from the lips of the skipper of the *Dirty Jane* ere he answered:

"I'll keep my trap shut, you can bet your immortal soul on that, McGlusky."

Once aboard the *Bonny Jean*, Mac set about the task of stowing away the pearl shell that had arrived in one of the schooners that had anchored near by, and this work was nearly completed when the Chinese boy, Ching How, blew in aboard a canoe manned by three Kanakas. Noticing that the Chinese lad had bought what seemed to be the whole of his belongings in a large canvas bag, Mac approached him, saying:

"Well, Ching, what's the trouble this time?"

"No trouble, Captain," replied the Chinese youth. "I've come aboard you to take service on your ship."

"The devil you have. Well, my son, I'm afraid I haven't room for you."

"Quong Sioue-e-e ordered me to come. He say: 'Ching How, you go aboard the ship of the big man who was here last night, and you serve him as you would serve me. If you fail him I will make you die the death of a monkey in the coils of a python.'"

"Well," remarked McGlusky, as he stood scratching his head in perplexity. "I suppose after last night it

would be foolish of me to turn down anyone sent me by that old wizard, but I don't know exactly what I can do with you, Ching How, aboard the *Bonny Jean*."

The Chinaman smiled blandly, saying: "Why you speaking of work to a Chinese boy that way; he can always find work anywhere, any time and place where there is work to be done."

"Well, I think you have about sized your countrymen up right, and for the sake of what happened in the hut when I was ashore last night, why, I'll take you."

Half an hour later when Mac was sitting in his cabin, Ching How came in on velvet feet, and closing the door, locked it, and then, after kneeling and putting his forehead first on one of McGlusky's feet and then on the other, he rose, and tossing down his quaint little skull cap he unplaited his long pigtail, and from amidst the thick plaits he drew three pearls which he held out with his hands concaved like a saucer for Mac's inspection. McGlusky was as good a judge of pearls as any man of any colour in those seas, and that was saying a great deal. The pearls he looked down upon were different in make and colour. They were not marvels by any means, but that they were pearls of value, any tyro could have told at a glance. One was black and full of quaint lights such as a good black pearl carries, another was filled with a beautiful, rosy pink colour, whilst the third was whiter than milk fresh drawn from the udder. After he had examined the trophies from the sea carefully, McGlusky said:

"Why do you show me these? Do you want me to offer you a price for them?"

"No, no price," exclaimed the Chinese. "These three pearls were amongst those I had with me last night when you saved my life. The others I have left with Quong Sioue-e to take care of until I return from the trip you are about to make, Master."

"What about these three?" The demand came from McGlusky's lips rather sharply.

"These are the price of the life you saved last night. I bring them as a love offering."

To say that Mac was astounded is to play with the English language; he was absolutely dumbfounded, for in all his dealings with Orientals or white men he had never come across gratitude like this.

"I can't take these as a gift for doing what any man with an atom of spunk in his composition would have done," he replied, trying to force the pearls back into the Chinese lad's hands. Ching How, wheeling round in the cabin, bolted like a scared rabbit, and with an ejaculation reminiscent of a sunset, Mac dropped the pearls into a safe place and roared his orders to up anchor and away. As he paced his deck that night he muttered: "I'm dashed if I know what made me take that Chinnee as part o' my crew, for I don't want him, but some all-compelling force made me do it. I wonder if that ancient devil doctor had a hand in this, by working on my subconscious mind for purposes of his own?—stranger things have happened." In the fullness of time Fate was to read that riddle for him.

CHAPTER VI

IN OLD JAPAN

THE *Bonny Jean*, running with a strong following breeze, was dancing merrily across the Pacific with her bows pointed straight for the islands of Japan that stood in pride and beauty, queen guardian of the seas that washed those coasts, a land of wondrous beauty dowered by Nature and added to by all the arts of an artistic people who are trained from earliest infancy to venerate the soil from whose brown bosom they sprung. They are a fighting breed, those men who call Japan their natal land, fighters both by land and sea, a proud and intolerant race, prone these modern times to overestimate their own importance in the scheme of the universe, and quarrelsome to a degree that will surely bring trouble in its wake. A gifted people, highly artistic and astoundingly clever commercially and industrially. In religious matters they stand apart from the faith of China and any of the many religions which govern intelligences in India, whilst as far as the white races are concerned they stand as far apart as the poles; their faith, the Shinto faith, is a beautiful one, full of idealism and nobility of teaching, though possibly the most real thing in the lives of these brown-skinned islanders is their patriotism, their love for the land of their nativity.

Their patriotism is not merely lip service; it springs from, and is the governing instinct of their lives nationally and individually, for it they live, and for it there is scarce a man born of woman in those islands who would

not willingly and gladly die. They are a big breed intellectually, though built on the small side physically. All these things McGlusky, who knew the Land of the Chrysanthemum inside out, was explaining to Judy Hiscox as they were pacing up and down the decks of the *Bonny Jean*. McGlusky, growing warm to his theme, painted with glowing colours the floral beauties of the land, towards which their vessel's bows were pointing.

"I was going to remark," he continued, "that there is scarce an acre in the whole of Japanese territory that is not under careful cultivation, but I will correct that thought, Miss Judy, and say that there is not a square foot of that teeming soil that is not being made to produce something, either for utility or for beauty; there is no waste allowed in the land of the Mikado. You could find a thousand times more idle soil in one county in England than you would discover in Japan if you examined it from coast-line to coast-line, north and south, east and west, with a microscope, for those thrifty islanders import nothing that they can produce or grow themselves. In many respects they are amongst the most interesting people in existence, for their folklore is full of legends, and by folk-lore and legend their love of country and their pride in their history is kept aflame. As an instance of this, one only has to go amongst the people and listen to them in their little wooden-framed, paper-walled, thatched-roofed homes tell their children about the destiny that has been designed for the Japanese by their gods. It is with every Japanese an article of solemn belief that the whole of the islands that dot the Pacific Ocean are the rightful property of the Japanese people, and they go further than that because it is with them a universal reality that the large islands of New Zealand, and the vast sub-continent of Australasia will eventually become Japanese territory, and will yet be inhabited by teeming millions of their race.

"A pretty fair size dream, McGlusky, is it not?" almost cooed Judy Hiscox, who had listened with quite the usual amount of American intolerance to this alleged vision of the Japanese.

"A dream, but only a dream which will bring them a damn bad awakening," growled McGlusky, whose Australian spirit was stirred by such a conversation as that in which he and the American woman were engaged. After a short pause, McGlusky followed up his theme, for there was nothing that the deep-thinking man loved better than to discourse upon topics of deep interest when at sea, providing he could find someone of sufficient intelligence who would listen and would join in on a debate with him.

McGlusky remarked grimly: "We'd have a word to say with the Japanese not only with regard to the growth of the intolerant spirit in their own country, but also in regard to the ownership and mastery of the hundreds of islands which dot the seas. My own opinion is," he added, "that Japan will have to put a bridle on the over-weaning ambition of its own people. I have," he continued, "made a deep and a peculiar study of the brown people who call the Mikado their Lord. There is much in, and about them, that I admire greatly, but there are other sides to their nature which are not so admirable. It will never surprise me," he continued, "to see in our own time China pull herself together and check, if they do not wipe out, the Japanese dream of Empire."

"Where did the masterful people known as the Japanese spring from originally, Skipper McGlusky?" demanded Judy Hiscox, who for her own part was ready to inquire into matters that were of more than passing interest.

"That," responded McGlusky, "is a moot question. There is plenty of evidence, however, that on the face of it goes to prove that originally the Japanese can claim

India as their parent soil, there are legends extant amongst them to the effect that bands of them were driven out of India by the Persian conquerors, and made their way to the islands that they now inhabit, and their legends more than hint that at a date, not so very far distant, the Japanese will regain their home in India and will control it by their military and naval genius."

Judy Hiscox threw back her head and laughed. There was all the pride of her American lineage ringing in the notes of her merriment.

"I guess," she drawled, "that before our Japanese friends can regain India they will have a word or two to say to England."

"Well, that is my own opinion also," replied McGlusky, speaking in low, deep, measured tones, "but their legends say, and it has been foretold by the great priests of the Shinto faith, who by the way are wonderfully and amazingly accurate in their prognostications, a fact that I have verified myself on more than one occasion. Those priests foretell a time when the English, grown slothful and over rich, will lose their grip upon India, and misled by malcontents in their own country, they will withdraw from India, and that will bring forth an era of anarchy that even India has not known in its ever changing history. The Afghan hordes will sweep down from their mountain fastnesses on to the fat, rich plains of Hindustan and will work havoc there until the Hindoos, stretching out appealing hands, call the Japanese, who are so similar to them in appearance, in customs and in many other ways, to help them, and the Japanese will leap at the chance and will take over what the English in their folly throw aside for any virile nation to pick up."

"Do you believe that, McGlusky?" demanded Judy Hiscox brusquely.

"No I do not," came the slow response, "but I can

see in England signs of disruption, signs that the greatest Empire that the world has ever known is either going to tumble to decay, or it will have to purge itself right in the heart of England of the weak elements that will otherwise destroy it."

It was in conversations on this matter, and not in idle chatter, but on informative subjects that McGlusky and his officers and the young frontiers' woman, Judy Hiscox, passed the time during the passage from Honolulu to the land of the Mikado. It is a common fallacy amongst home-staying shoremen who have no knowledge of the sea, that sailor men riding the ocean fill in their time with carousings and recapitulations of debauches when ashore, nothing could be further from the truth than this. Men of the McGlusky type and his officers are found in the service of every nation that plies the seas, and serious conversation is far more often heard amongst them than amongst similar grades of humanity ashore. It was well for the important personages aboard the *Bonny Jean* that they had interesting subjects to employ their mental powers upon for the whole passage was utterly devoid of incident or of adventure of any kind.

The wind that had picked them up when they had left Honolulu stayed faithfully with them until they sighted the coasts of Japan. Blue water ran under their keel, and a blue heaven smiled down upon them, whilst the sunlight was just warm enough to make their lightest clothing acceptable to them; it was in fact a veritable heaven upon the ocean, and when at last they picked up the islands of Japan, on which rests Nagasaki, the great coasting station of the brown people, they had encountered nothing that might be calculated to raise a disturbing thought. During the voyage Judy Hiscox had asked repeatedly for information concerning that "iron kettle" as she designated the *Dirty Jane* and its skipper, old Jo Starboard, until at last McGlusky, after

long hesitation, decided that it was his duty to his business partner to tell her something about the history of the *Dirty Jane* and her none too cleanly skipper. He told the pioneer girl of his long years of acquaintance with the hardy old mariner, and also of the many big business transactions that he had had with that worthy, transactions in which the horrible old tramp, the *Dirty Jane*, had played no inconspicuous part.

"There is not a stauncher or more reliable man in the sweep of the Eastern Seas than old Jo Starboard," said Mac emphatically, "and for that matter I have never met a tougher or more wondrously brave man in all my wandering career. Jo Starboard, he is of the stuff that built up the British Empire, he is not much to look at in these days, for he has been battered about, and broken and patched up until he is nearly as knocked about as his ship, the *Dirty Jane*. He has lost one eye, one leg, and half the fingers off each hand. Nor is he over particular in the matter of his dress, but when he puts his hand to a job he will stay with it to the crack of doom, no matter how the trouble thickens around him, in fact it is my private opinion that Skipper Starboard needs a real spice of danger to bring out his best qualities, and it is quite on the cards that the contract I made with him recently in Honolulu may bristle with real danger, and no one is better aware of that fact than he is, for the old skipper has had quite a large experience of the brown men and their methods during his thirty-odd years wandering all over the islands from the Arctic edge to the coasts of Australia. If there is a man living who can be said to know *all* the islands, which I doubt, why, the skipper of the *Dirty Jane* is that man."

Judy Hiscox listened with the closest attention because her quick brain told her that all the preamble was but a prelude to lead up to something of infinite importance because McGlusky was the last man in the

world to waste his time eulogizing anyone without a purpose.

"Did you, McGlusky," she demanded, "make any arrangements with that old skipper of the dirty tramp that have to do with our venture?"

"That's just the point," exclaimed Mac, "I did make a definite deal with him without consulting you, because I thought that was a matter that lay within my province as skipper of this expedition."

"I'm not questioning that in the least," came the hearty response. "I know you only acted for the best in our mutual interest whatever you may have done, so let that go and what is more, if it goes against your grain to open that close mouth of yours, McGlusky, why, keep the business you have arranged with Skipper Starboard locked in your own brain. I'm trusting you body and boots."

"I guess I knew that without being told, Miss Judy, though I am glad that you've voiced your opinion. Well, this is briefly what I have done. I told Starboard our intention to go and make an almighty big scoop of seal furs in Japanese waters, and I expressed the opinion that it was on the cards that after we had secured the seal furs we might have to run for our lives from a Japanese craft of war. I told him also that I had a couple of quick-firing guns and one almighty big gun aboard the *Bonny Jean*, and an adequate supply of ammunition for those guns and for rifles, and also that we had a useful supply of boarding pikes and cutlasses stowed away between decks."

"Well," ejaculated Judy, "what did the skipper have to say to that piece of audacity?"

"His reply was characteristic of the man," replied McGlusky: "Dash my buttons if I don't feel like chucking this old hooker of mine and coming along with you, for I owe those Japs a grudge for the loss of my left eye and my leg. It was a shell from a Japanese

long hesitation, decided that it was his duty to his business partner to tell her something about the history of the *Dirty Jane* and her none too cleanly skipper. He told the pioneer girl of his long years of acquaintance with the hardy old mariner, and also of the many big business transactions that he had had with that worthy, transactions in which the horrible old tramp, the *Dirty Jane*, had played no inconspicuous part.

"There is not a stauncher or more reliable man in the sweep of the Eastern Seas than old Jo Starboard," said Mac emphatically, "and for that matter I have never met a tougher or more wondrously brave man in all my wandering career. Jo Starboard, he is of the stuff that built up the British Empire, he is not much to look at in these days, for he has been battered about, and broken and patched up until he is nearly as knocked about as his ship, the *Dirty Jane*. He has lost one eye, one leg, and half the fingers off each hand. Nor is he over particular in the matter of his dress, but when he puts his hand to a job he will stay with it to the crack of doom, no matter how the trouble thickens around him, in fact it is my private opinion that Skipper Starboard needs a real spice of danger to bring out his best qualities, and it is quite on the cards that the contract I made with him recently in Honolulu may bristle with real danger, and no one is better aware of that fact than he is, for the old skipper has had quite a large experience of the brown men and their methods during his thirty-odd years wandering all over the islands from the Arctic edge to the coasts of Australia. If there is a man living who can be said to know *all* the islands, which I doubt, why, the skipper of the *Dirty Jane* is that man."

Judy Hiscox listened with the closest attention because her quick brain told her that all the preamble was but a prelude to lead up to something of infinite importance because McGlusky was the last man in the

world to waste his time eulogizing anyone without a purpose.

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gunboat that shivered my timbers years ago and left me with a game leg and one lamp, and I'd dearly love to pay them back for it. I have paid them back in a sense,' he added, with one of his broad British grins, 'by contravening their laws in all the islands which they have a mandate over, whenever I had a chance to do so, and please God I'll keep on doing it until the time comes for me to go to Davy Jones's locker, damn the Japs!'"

"That sounds healthy to me," laughed Judy, "I think I'm going to like the dirty old man in spite of the disreputable state of his trousers."

"His trousers are the worst part of him," laughed McGlusky. "Old Jo is a bit of real British oak at heart and a true man to the marrow of him, and what is more, he's a thundering good hater, and I would not give the wag of a dog's tail for a man who did not know how to hate when he had occasion so to do."

"Where does the skipper and that old tub of his come in on a venture of this kind?" demanded Judy, adding a moment later:

"She can't travel with us even in an almost calm sea; the *Bonny Jean* would run away from her."

"That is so, but in a sense the very slowness of the *Dirty Jane* may prove a most valuable asset to us, because the Japanese, with all their native shrewdness, are not likely to suspect her of being used as an accomplice of ours. My arrangement with Skipper Starboard is that he shall go his way at his best speed to a cluster of islands that lie on the edge of the Arctic circle and are within a reasonable distance of the spot I have selected to raid for seal pelts."

He stood musing a moment arranging his thought, and then, continuing, said: "You see, Miss Judy, that old hooker of his can go from one of those semi-Arctic islands to the other trading with the inhabitants and not arouse the suspicion of the Japanese by doing so,

and I on the *Bonny Jean* will have a pretty good idea where to pick him up at any time I may want him, and that time will be as soon as I have a fairly rich cargo of pelts aboard. I shan't wait to load the *Bonny Jean* up to the gunwales, I'll rush to the Arctic sealing islands, as the small group of isles are called by seafaring men, and I'll place the consignment of seal furs aboard the *Dirty Jane*, and then rip back for another catchment whilst Starboard and that old hooker of his go on from island to island without anyone guessing that he has a valuable assortment of seal furs beneath his hatches. I will run back a second time to another sealing ground, get my furs, and dodge back to the *Dirty Jane*, and so by this means I hope to outwit the sharp-eyed brown men and their sea patrols. By the time I have my load in we should have something like a fair-sized fortune aboard the *Dirty Jane*, and then we on the *Bonny Jean* will run in ballast without any cargo whatever to San Francisco ahead of the old iron tramp, and of course we shall expect to be caught and overhauled by Japanese patrols *en route*, and when they examine me and find that I have nothing aboard, they can think what they like, but they won't be able to prove a darned thing against me. What do you think of my plan? "

As those words shot from McGlusky's lips he looked squarely into the girl's eyes and saw that they were burning with hearty, healthy excitement, and her words which came to his ears signalled faith and hope, if not charity, as she said:

"I think, McGlusky, that you are showing that you have not only bravery and brawn but an unlimited supply of cool, level-headed brain." Then she added with a chuckle, "almost as if you were a Yankee instead of an Australian."

"Thanks for that left-handed compliment," chuckled Mac, "though you're only leg pulling, but really I

think my plan well conceived, and I only hope we can carry it into effect as well as it has been planned."

As the *Bonny Jean* was dropping anchor off Nagasaki, Judy remarked to the second officer:

"I think I'll go ashore as soon as the permits have been secured from the shore authorities to do so."

"Mighty little trouble about that in Japan; these folks are only too glad to have Europeans land here," replied the officer genially, then as Judy was turning away, the second in command remarked:

"If you have no objection, Miss Judy, I'll apply for permission to accompany you. I know Japan inside out."

"I'm much obliged," replied the girl, "but I really want you to understand that I do not require a wet nurse, or a dry nurse either, for that matter. I've been in the habit all my life of looking after my sweet self, and I prefer to have things that way. I have already made arrangements with Ching How, the Chinese boy, to accompany me. He tells me that he knows quite a lot of the Jap language and is familiar, not only with their manners and customs and the etiquette of their country, but he knows the geography of the place, and will thus be able to tell me the line of route I should follow so as to cover the greatest amount of ground in the fortnight which we are to stay here."

The officer felt and showed a certain amount of chagrin at this refusal of Judy's to employ his services, and as he turned away he shot a rather malevolent glance at Ching How, who was hanging around as usual in Miss Judy's vicinity, and as he passed he sent a crisp, sailor's benediction at the yellow boy. He thought he had lowered his voice sufficiently to escape the notice of Miss Judy, but that young lady had preternaturally sharp ears, and she caught the seafaring benediction which floated towards Ching How and she chuckled, for she was essentially feminine in every respect and it

tickled her to death to think that the sailor should feel hurt by her refusal to accept his escort. When Judy explained to McGlusky, as she was bound to do to the skipper, her intention of going ashore for the full fortnight of their stay whilst he was securing the trade goods that they required, Mac looked at her and laughed and answered jovially:

"You've made a jolly good selection in the shape of an escort; that yellow boy just worships the ground you walk on, and of this I am absolutely certain, unless I am mistaken in my sizing up of the yellow lad's character. He is not only highly intelligent, but he would be faithful to the last gasp to you, or to anyone connected with our enterprise. He is also almighty cute, and from observations he has dropped casually to me in conversation, I have more than suspicioned that he has formed a pretty close idea of what our real business with the *Bonny Jean* is. I don't think for a moment that I have thrown dust in that pagan's eyes by my talk of trade goods for the Arctic Islands. There is another reason why I am glad he is to be your escort: he is an Oriental, and only Orientals can read the thoughts of other sons of the Orient. A white man with years of experience may make a very good guess concerning the thoughts of Chinese or Japs, but it is only guess work. People of their own kind alone can really plumb the depths and shallows of their mentalities, and I'll drop a very broad hint to Ching How apart from looking after your own comfort (there won't be any question of watching over your safety) for you will be as safe sightseeing with the Japanese as you would be in San Francisco or Sydney, or London itself for that matter, and I shall tell him to keep all his wits about him and try and learn if the Japanese have any suspicions concerning our movements, and if so, what form the suspicions are likely to take."

When Judy Hiscox, accompanied by Ching How,

took her departure from the *Bonny Jean*, the second mate took occasion to whisper in the ear of the Chinese boy:

"Listen here, you yellow pagan, you are going to look after the white Missy, eh? Well, if anything happens to her whilst she is in your charge, don't you come back on this vessel; if you do I'll skin you alive with my own hands, and what is left of you I'll feed to the sharks. Get that, savvy, eh?"

The Chinese boy, drawing himself up to the full of his rather insignificant height, looked at the officer through eyelids that he had almost closed—so much so that only a gleam like the edge of a knife blade showed of his Oriental eyes, and then he let loose half a dozen sentences, partly in English and partly in Chinese, that expressed his contempt for the officer who had threatened him, and finished up by saying in his best and most polished English:

"A fool's mouth is like a dead oyster, oh man of much magnificence, it is always open. If the So Estimable Lady comes to harm when under my charge, then there will not be enough of my body left alive to be worth punishing."

The line of march that Ching How had mapped out for Judy Hiscox was a direct route to Tokio, the Mikado's capital, and as the journey was to be done by rickshaw, Ching How took precious good care to select a pair of fast and hardy-looking coolies and two rickshaws in good condition, and to them he promised a reward commensurate with their services if they got to the capital with all speed. As soon as she had left Nagasaki well behind her, Judy became intensely interested in the country through which her rickshaw boy was taking her at a jog trot that threw the miles behind them at a really amazing pace. The keynote of the countryside was industry. Men, women, girls and little children all were pressed into service in the fields, and

it was easy to understand how such a people could thrive and become mighty as a nation even with so little land to each family; that they desired to become great was manifest, for they made much out of little. After they had progressed some little distance with Judy in the lead with her rickshaw, the American girl threw her national prejudices on one side, and turning in her seat, beckoned to Ching How to bring his rickshaw up alongside hers, and he, obeying with the promptitude of his people, Judy at once opened batteries of inquiries and bombarbed the Chinese lad with questions concerning everything of interest that met her eyes, and she found that Ching How was a veritable mine of information, and in this way Judy gathered more knowledge in that one trip than many tourists pick up in many months lounging about the capital and the other big cities.

When she arrived at Tokio she employed precisely the same methods of obtaining information. She and Ching How traversed every street, alley and by-way in the capital of the Japanese nation, and after that they pursued their way to Yokohama and in this manner they perambulated Japan for the full fortnight, and then Ching How and the American pioneer woman went back to the wharf, near to which the *Bonny Jean* lay moored.

"Had a good time, Judy?" demanded McGlusky as he reached out a great paw and gathered the girlish hand into his own as she climbed aboard.

"Splendid," came the swift response, "and I want to say right here, McGlusky, that the Japanese deserve every word of the praise you bestowed upon them in regard to their courtesy towards white women. I have not had the faintest shadow of a cause for complaint whilst travelling through this wonderful Land of the Chrysanthemum. Not only have I received no insult by word or look, but I was, if anything, overwhelmed

by the courtesy of this brown-skinned people, who in this respect can compare very, very favourably with any white people with whom I have so far associated in the course of my life. The brown men don't insult a white woman with their eyes as so-called gentlemen so often do in continental cities."

"I never had a doubt of it," almost growled McGlusky. "If I had felt the slightest shadow of doubt concerning their treatment of you, do you think for a moment that I would have permitted you to have gone roaming around the country attended only by a Chinese boy? By the way, what kind of an attendant did you find Ching How?"

"Well," laughed Judy, "the man or woman who wants a better cicerone than Ching How proved to be on this trip, why they must be perfect gluttons. He is a little gold mine with regard to information, McGlusky, and he is as astute as anything on two legs can be. He smoothed down every difficulty as it arose with a placid calmness that was wonderful to behold, and he prevented the slightest suspicion of friction. He has a yellow skin but he has a heart of gold, make no mistake about that, McGlusky. He is utterly reliable and dependable in every shape and form."

"You don't surprise me," retorted Mac. "I have studied that lad mighty closely, and after the character that the old devil doctor, Quong Sioue-e-e, gave him when we were in the old witch doctor's hut in Honolulu, I expected nothing but the best from him, and I am glad that he has lived up to his reputation."

"When do we sail from here?" queried Judy.

"We go out with the tide, just about moon-rise to-night, and I don't mind telling you that I don't think that we have a thing aboard in the shape of trade goods, or any other thing, that these Japanese are not thoroughly acquainted with. They know every mortal

thing I have purchased; they are as suspicious as the devil, but I think if it is possible to allay the suspicions of the Japanese officials, I have managed to throw dust in their eyes."

"That's good hearing," almost cooed Judy Hiscox. "I'm glad to know that there is no likelihood of trouble because I am keen on going to the sealing ground and I know that you are also."

McGlusky emitted a short, barking laugh and then said:

"The longest way round is often the shortest way home, young lady, especially when you are dealing with Orientals." He thrust both his hands into his trousers' pockets to the limit, and balancing himself heels to toes, he stood ruminating for a second or two and then spoke out to his feminine partner, saying:

"I *think* we are all right so far, but to make assurance doubly sure, I am going to send that Chinese pagan of ours, Ching How, ashore for the few hours that we still have to spend here waiting for the turning tide."

"What can the yellow boy find out in so short a time, McGlusky?"

"He may," replied the skipper, "discover more in an hour or two here than any white agent would find out in a month of Sundays. This port is honeycombed with Chinese who work in every capacity. One of the principal employments for Chinamen in this port, and in every other port in Japan, is that of accountants for merchants, big and small."

"You surprise me," replied Judy. "I should have thought that the Japanese would have been too independent to employ Chinamen to keep their books and look after their accounts."

"Well, it is the wonderful reputation that Chinamen have for honesty that finds the Chinese employment here. It is not only because of their honesty and truthfulness, but because in their arithmetic they can beat

any of the white races to a frazzle in that department, so if Ching How is half as wide awake as I think he is, I have not a shadow of a doubt that he will manage to scrape acquaintance with some of his countrymen who may be in a position to give him information concerning the opinions the Japs have formed concerning the *Bonny Jean* and her mission overseas, for what the Japanese guess of our movements some of those Chinamen are sure to be acquainted with. Anyway, I am going to set our boy foot-loose with a bit of gambling money in his pockets, for the best way to introduce yourself in a port town to the Chinese element is to go on a gambling venture. You won't win much money, I can assure you of that; I know, for I've tried in every blessed port in this country and never came away a winner, but I always managed to scrape up a friendship with some well-informed Chinese, and what I could do moderately well I am tolerably certain Ching How will do fifty times more effectively, for there is no one on this planet who responds more readily and so surely to the call of the blood than do the Chinamen."

Sending a deck hand in search of Ching How, McGlusky soon informed the yellow boy concerning what he required him to do, and with a shrug of his shoulders Ching How accepted the gambling money and the commission that was thrust upon him. All he had to say as he turned to move away from McGlusky was:

"Master, perhaps I lose little bit, perhaps I lose it all. Some of the Chinese gamblers know all there is to know about the gambling games they play, but if the Japanese authorities are suspicious of the *Bonny Jean* I will know it, and know what form their suspicions will take before I come aboard to-night."

"Don't worry your head about losing the money I have given you to game with," smiled McGlusky. "I have given it you to lose in order to pave your way into

the good graces of any of your countrymen who may be able to give you the information we so badly need."

That night, just in time for the *Bonny Jean* to weigh her anchor to catch the outgoing tide, Ching How came aboard and he stumbled as he walked, which caused the first mate to remark to McGlusky with a grin: "Hullo, Ching How must have a skin full, he is hic-coughing with his feet." Going straight to McGlusky, Ching How pulled the big fellow's head down so that he could just breathe a whisper into his ear. He said:

"The Japs do not know whether you have given out the true story with regard to the ports you are going to make for in the islands; nor are they quite sure if you are a simple trader, but they mean to make sure. The *Bonny Jean* will not be half-way to the horizon before a Japanese gunboat, disguised as a trading vessel, will be after you like dolphins playing round a sailing ship."

"The little brown devils mean to follow us, then, eh Ching How?"

"Sure they follow, and I have heard some news that is not good news concerning an Australian ship that quite recently went seal poaching, not to the spot, Estimable One, you have marked on your chart which you left in your cabin so that I could see it when I was tidying up your papers, but over away to the south-east was where the Australian was followed."

"What happened there?" demanded McGlusky, and the vibration in his voice told the keen-eared Chinese that the very mention of an Australian ship in trouble roused McGlusky's blood. Ching How, bending still closer to the skipper's ear, murmured:

"You, Most Estimable One, must believe what this Unworthy One is going to tell, for it is true words that I am about to speak. A Chinese merchant's clerk told me in sacred confidence after he had won a lot of the money you gave me to gamble with, Estimable One, the story I am going to tell you, and he was in fear

of his life when he parted with the information to me, and he would not have dared to have breathed the news in my ear even as I am breathing it in yours, but that I had made a sign to him which told him that he and I belonged to one of the greatest secret societies in China, a secret society which demands of a member that he must be born into it, and have been nominated by his parents."

"I get your meaning, Ching How, and I'm thundering glad that I had the common sense to send you ashore to-night. Now what about the Australian ship?"

"The Australian ship," replied Ching How, "was making her way with a full cargo of poached seal skins when she was challenged by a Japanese Ocean patrol. The Australians were armed with quick-firing guns and rifles, they refused to surrender, the Japanese ran alongside them and boarded, and a fierce fight took place in which the Japanese were driven off, and getting into their boats, made their way back to their own vessel. The Australians with whom they had fought the battle, were moving off under full sail when the Japanese opened on them with a big gun that had been concealed in the forrard part of their vessel. It needed only a few shots from that gun to send the Australians bottom side up, and by the end of twenty minutes they had sunk and there was nothing left to show they had ever been except some loose planks and lengths of rope, and the bodies of dead or wounded men. The Australians had been sent to the port of no return, Estimable One, and not a word has ever been heard of this matter. The Japanese do not publish such things in their papers, neither do they give information to the nation to which the ship they had attacked belongs; they simply count the episode as ended, and it was, Estimable One, as far as your countrymen of Australia were concerned."

"So," growled McGlusky through gritting teeth,

"that's that, is it, well it's not the first time I've heard of such happenings, and I'll take thundering good care that the Japs don't catch me and the *Bonny Jean* in the same manner. But jump to your duties, Ching How, I'm more than pleased with you, and when you tell old Quong Sioue-e-e the happenings of this night when you meet him again in Honolulu, you can say that I am satisfied with you."

When they were well out on the high seas, McGlusky called both his officers and Judy Hiscox to a consultation in his cabin, and when once they were assembled he told them in brief tones what he had gathered from Ching How, and he especially emphasized that portion of his information dealing with the alleged sinking of the Australian trader by the Jap patrol.

"Of course," he added, "this is only hearsay evidence; we have not a scintilla of proof that the Japs did sink an Australian vessel, but I have formed my own opinion concerning that matter and I must leave you to do the same. Now it is my idea that I should get the crew in here in batches and tell them what I have heard. It is not fair to run men into such deadly danger without giving them their chance of voting upon it."

"Don't think you have much need of a vote, Skipper," rumbled the first officer, who was a man of exceeding few words and swift action. "As for myself, I say we've commenced on this job and we knew when we started that it would not be a kid glove game by any manner o' means, and if you want my vote here and now, why here it is in less than a dozen words. I say, Skipper, let's go through with the job we started out to do, and the devil run away with the brown men; they don't own the earth, not yet, or the waters of the earth, and by the Lord Harry I hope the day will never come when white men will have to crawl in the presence of the brown breed."

"That goes for me, too," put in the second officer,

and Judy Hiscox, bringing her knuckles down with a smart rap on the table, cried:

"I am heart and soul in accord with your officers, Captain McGlusky; we'll gamble on our chances. Life isn't worth a thing without a hazard in it."

"That's good hearing," exclaimed McGlusky abruptly, "now send the men to me in batches of half-dozens and I'll lay the whole matter in front of them, and, in the meantime see that the steersman keeps the course I have set him. We'll run straight ahead for the islands, anyway, and start opening up our trade; after that it will be our wits against the brown patrol, and I'm backing the Anglo-Saxon brain against the Asiatic."

Judy remained in the cabin chatting to the hard-faced leader who looked at her so admiringly on account of her spunky speech with regard to the continuing of their enterprise. Soon the crew came pounding into the cabin, each man pulling off his cap as he landed in this holy of holies, and whilst they waited for McGlusky to open fire on them, each man passively chewed his plug of tobacco, but not one of them expectorated on that floor, and the man who had been guilty of such a violation of the decencies would have been pitched out neck and crop by no less a person than the skipper himself, for in such matters McGlusky was a great stickler for etiquette; no admiral on his quarter-deck was more so. Few men on land or sea could have beaten McGlusky in the telling of an important piece of news. Very swiftly he explained fully the purpose of the *Bonny Jean* in the voyage that she had undertaken. McGlusky knew perfectly well that the crew had long since gathered what his intentions were amongst the seals. The tackle they had had to handle and stow away must have told such a pack of old timers what such tackle was intended for. But he thought the hour had arrived when he should make things plain, and this,

he did in a very few graphic sentences, and the grins that overspread the faces of the men as they listened, told him what their verdict would be when he put the question to them. The bos'n, who considered himself to be quite a privileged person with the skipper, shutting one eye, exclaimed to McGlusky:

"Sir, you have surprised us not a little bit telling us we were going on such an ungodly job as seal poaching. We all thought, sir, that the *Bonny Jean* was going to the islands to distribute tracts and bibles to the buck-heathen, and jam and tooth brushes to the dusky wenches."

This typical bit of sea humour brought a hearty roar of laughter from the rest of the men in the cabin. McGlusky, accepting things in the spirit in which they had received his information, nodded to them good-humouredly, and then started to tell them what he had heard in regard to the sinking of the Australian trader by a Jap ship of war.

"I can't vouch for the truth of this," he added, "but it seems more than probable that it *is* the truth, and men, I can't tell you just where I got my information from. It came by a secret channel, and as my soul liveth I believe it to be true. Now, what about you, are you prepared to go on and take your chances, or shall we make a new deal and run a legitimate trading expedition? There won't be much money in a trade voyage but there will be no danger."

The answer came like shots from rifles and McGlusky knew from that moment that he had not underestimated the metal of the men he had selected for a tough job. The rest of the crew fell into step in the same wholehearted manner when it came their turn to face the skipper in his cabin. So McGlusky, as soon as that matter had been disposed of, called for the bos'n and gave him orders to bring up the rifles, bombs, and other weapons of warfare so that they might all be over-

hauled and got in readiness for anything that might happen.

When this had been accomplished, Mac gave his free-booter crew a little rough and ready training in cutlass and bombing drill and in the use of the boarding pikes, and the hearty way in which his men toyed with their weapons made him doubly sure that if it came to a battle royal with the Japanese, his men would give a desperately good account of themselves. The most important portion of their day's work was the overhauling and furbishing up of the machine-guns, and the heavy gun that would throw a shell that would work havoc with anything that it might land upon. This work and the appointing of stations for the men in the event of combat with a hostile vessel filled in the day, and when the men were going below for their evening meal Mac noticed that they frolicked one with the other, and played practical jokes and were in the very pink of high spirits. Even Moonshine, the nigger cook, and Ching How, the Chinese boy, joined in the frolicsomeness. One of the men went a bit too far with the Chinese boy, bringing him down heavily on the deck. Instantly Ching How showed that he was not made of the stuff which would stand treatment of that kind without a protest. Wheeling like a wild cat on the brawny son of the sea who had downed him, Ching How, slipping a wicked-looking knife from one of the hidden places in his garments, exclaimed:

"This So Humble One kisses the feet of your greatness—but a knife blade between the ribs of the So Strong One may let sense into the head whilst it permits life to depart—this is not a threat, it is a promise."

And the sailor who had been the cause of the disturbance had the good sense to accept the promise and let it go at that.

McGlusky had sent a man to the mast-head to watch

out in the wake of the *Bonny Jean*, so that if any vessel had started in pursuit of them they might become aware of the fact and so be ready for eventualities. But no warning cry came out of the mouth of the look-out man, and as he was one of the sharpest of the crew, McGlusky felt that for the time being, at any rate, all was well, though after the notice he had received through the mediumship of Ching How, Mac would not have been surprised to have heard that a pursuing craft was even then showing above the horizon. A beautiful moon was riding in the sky, making the ocean seem a dream of loveliness and peace, but as McGlusky trod the deck that night he did not permit appearances to lull his sense of watchfulness to sleep, and as he walked the white planks of the *Bonny Jean* with his second officer, he remarked:

"All my life I have made a practise of remembering that when things appear to be safest, soundest and most peaceful, that is the time for wise men to keep their eyes skinned, for when trouble springs from unknown circumstances it more often catches men off their guard and therefore practically defenceless, and this," he added, "applies not only to things at sea but to life ashore."

Days passed uneventfully and still there was no sign of a pursuing Japanese craft, but they met a good-sized cargo vessel flying the Australian flag making homewards, and Mac signalled that he would like to go aboard and have a conversation, and as he gave his name his request was instantly granted by the tramp hauling in most of her canvas and bringing herself to a standstill. Mac put off in one of his own boats, and as soon as he had come within hail he discovered that the skipper of the Australian tramp was an old acquaintance of his who welcomed him aboard with the whole-hearted freedom that is such a conspicuous trait of the Australian character. As soon as they had ensconced

themselves in the tramp's cabin, McGlusky and the skipper over a glass of grog got right to essentials, McGlusky saying:

"Did you ever know Bob Carew, the skipper of the Australian trader, the *Wallaby*?"

"Sure I did," came the ready response. "I knew Bob Carew as though he had been my own brother; why do you ask?"

"Well," answered McGlusky, "it's rather a delicate matter I'm asking you about because I've only got hearsay evidence to go on, and hearsay evidence is often the king pin amongst lears, but I've heard that Bob Carew and the *Wallaby* with all hands aboard her was sunk by the Japanese. Have you heard any whisper of that kind? I know," he added, "how news of this kind travels about the seas in spite of the secrecy with which such deeds are carried out. That's why I hailed you to have a confab. We are both Australians," he added a moment later, "and so was Bob Carew; so our palaver can be considered as sacred."

The tramp's skipper showed by his face that he understood fully the gravity of the communication that had been made to him.

"Well," said he, "I will tell you all I know of the matter, and it is this: it is current amongst the skippers who travel these waters that Bob Carew and the *Wallaby* were sent to the bottom of the Pacific; sent there by a Japanese patrol boat, but there is no proof, nor ever will be any, for the Japs' naval secret service is the best in the world."

"Was there any reason, or have you heard any reason why Bob Carew met with such handling?"

The skipper of the tramp looked up with a short, hard laugh, and meeting McGlusky's eyes squarely, he said:

"Dash it all, man, there isn't a fellow living who knows better than yourself that there wasn't a tougher

citizen of the sea in these waters than Bob Carew. He was a seal poacher all right, a chap always ready and willing to take a chance against odds. I happen to know of my own knowledge that he was returning from a seal poaching expedition in Japanese territory when he suddenly disappeared from the waters of the world, and then a whisper borne by a sea breeze spread the tale through the islands, and to all the Australian ports, that Bob and the *Wallaby* and all hands had been sent west by a brown patrol. Now you've got all I know, McGlusky, and I can't vouch for that, but by the whiskers of a sea-horse I believe it is a true tale. Bob asked for what he got—and got it."

"Well, I'm glad I overhauled you," responded McGlusky, "and got informatory evidence, because I shall now be doubly on the look-out. Bob Carew lost his ship and his life, and the patrol that overhauled him and sent him to David Jones's locker must have been full of ginger; no fool outfit could have downed such a spunky deil as Bob—God bless his sinful soul, he was a good pal."

The skipper, filling McGlusky's glass again, said with a twinkle in his eyes:

"I've a sort of stupid notion, Mac, that you have designs on poached goods yourself."

Mac's eyes fairly danced as he replied:

"I don't know how you got hold of such ungodly notions, mate, concerning me. I am too peacefully inclined by nature ever to be a sort of half-grown buccaneer; leave seal poaching and Jap fighting to men who like the wild ways of life, but for me, why bless my soul, what have you ever known me do that you should imagine that I should become a law breaker at my present time of existence? I much prefer trading, and when I grow tired of trade I shall go back to pearls again, and that, old son, is the tale that you can tell to any of my old cronies you meet in Australian waters."

The two men looked hard into each other's eyes and chuckled as they looked, for they understood one another very well.

"Oh, I'll tell that story if you want me to tell it at every Australian port I touch at, but Mac, old sportsman, I doubt very much if I shall get many traders who know you to believe that tale, even though I swear to it on my gospel oath as a true story."

The two men parted as amicably as they had met, and each went a different course, the tramp making for Sydney and Melbourne, McGlusky still steering his course towards the frozen isles. It grew colder and colder as they proceeded, and the *Bonny Jean's* crew were glad to put on their stoutest clothing. As for Judy Hiscox, she appeared on deck daily now in all the bravery of a thick fur coat that Jack London had presented her with before she left San Francisco. There came a day when the look-out man at the mast-head sent out the welcome cry—"land ahead on the starboard bow." Then McGlusky called to his cabin a sailor whom he had purposefully chosen for membership in the crew because the man had claimed in Frisco that he had worked for some years on traders to the frozen isles, and had been employed in the important capacity of steersman by the skippers with whom he had cruised. He was a very reliable sort of fellow named Baldy Jinks. He was nicknamed by the crew Baldy, because surely nowhere in the wide world could a man have been found with a more tangled mass of iron-grey hair than Jinks possessed. As soon as this fellow appeared in Mac's presence, the skipper promptly tackled him, saying:

"Well, Jinks, I'm going to see if you are as good as your brag, my lad. You said that you knew the coasts of these islands as well as a schoolboy knows his copy book."

The sailor gave a hitch to his pants and answered:

"I do know them, Skipper, well enough to take the *Bonny Jean* into any port you may wish to make for."

"I'm glad to hear you stick to your story, Jinks, my lad, for without you it would have been a slow job picking our way forward with the lead going all the time, and the look-out at the mast-head conning every yard of the coast."

Mac watched the man's face as he spoke to him, and what he read there made him feel perfectly satisfied that Baldy Jinks either knew the coasts of the islands remarkably well, or he had a strange conceit that he did. After cogitating deeply for a moment, Mac put this query:

"Say, Baldy, which of the islands is that which our look-out can make out ahead of us on the starboard bow?"

"I dunno, Skipper, I can't say until I can make out some of the leading landmarks, and I won't be able to do that until we get a good deal nearer than we are now."

Mac produced a map and a chart, and pointing to what was marked as a small snow-covered mountain or a prominent hill, he said:

"Do you know that?"

"Yes, sir, and if we sight that we shan't be far from Land Locked Bay on the centre island of the three frozen islands; once I clap my eyes on that, sir, I shall know where I am as surely as a beer bum knows his way to a free lunch counter in Frisco."

"Very well, Baldy, what you have told me sounds good to me. Go and take the wheel, and the second officer will stand by and will give you a hand."

"Beg pardon, sir," growled Baldy, "but I'd rather have the bos'n for a chum at the wheel than the second officer, if I may, sir?"

"Why?" asked McGlusky.

"Well, sir, the bos'n is not one of them sailor men who thinks he knows the earth and the fullness of it;

he'll just work with me an' take my word for anything we have to do together, but the second mate is a bit fond o' showing his authority, an' may want to argue the point just when there ain't any time for arguing, an', sir, there's some ticklish steerin' to be done afore the *Bonny Jean* drops anchor in the little bay I knows of, sir."

"Very well, yours is the responsibility as steersman. Take the bos'n as your mate an' see to it you don't tear the bottom out o' the *Bonny Jean*, or pile her up on a reef, or I'll tear the bottom out o' you, savvy, eh?" snapped McGlusky, as he turned and began to get all the men fitted into their stations. As Mac turned away the steersman remarked to the bos'n with a grin: "'E is mighty free with his promises o' 'ealthy entertainment, our skipper, ain't 'e, bos'n?"

CHAPTER VII

THE SHADOW OF A GREAT PERIL

A good look over his men told McGlusky that they were right on their toes, ready for anything in the shape of work or a rough house with the Japanese or anyone else for that matter. He had fed them well, he had had them schooled ever since they left San Francisco bay. He had been too wise in regard to discipline to try and keep his men under an iron rule, he had given them a larger amount of liberty than fell to the lot of most crews aboard such a craft as his, but never once did he let his grip get so loose on them that there was any danger of them getting out of hand, nothing is worse for sailor men on a cruise than having a slack commander over them. On every possible occasion Mac had proved by practical demonstration to his crew that he knew his job better than any man aboard the vessel, and he had been very quick to pick out any sign of slackness on the part of any individual man, and when he did have to reprimand one of his crew that man got such a tongue blistering that he felt as if he had hot peppers in his ears for a week afterwards. On the other hand, McGlusky had not been like so many skippers, always on top of the men nagging at them and so weakening his authority and fraying the nerves of his crew.

He had given them proper work to do, and he saw to it that they did it, and did it thoroughly, but in every respect he had studied their comfort without coddling them, and the result was that now they had arrived at

the critical portion of their venture his men were fit, well and sweet tempered and ripe and ready for any job that he might ask them to perform, and without once mentioning the matter he had so impressed his personality upon his crew, that there was not one of them who doubted that when the time came for the real hard work amongst the seals their skipper would work them to the very limit, work them like galley slaves, work them until they would all be walking about in their sleep. He had just finished his inspection of the men when a cry rang out from the mast-head intimating that the mountain marked on the chart as Lookout Mountain was in sight, and instantly Mac, stepping briskly, conveyed the information to Baldy and the bos'n at the wheel. Not that there was any necessity for McGlusky to repeat the information that had been shouted by the look-out man. Both the men at the wheel were sharp eared and attentive to duty, but Mac never left a thing to chance that a little care could improve upon, and the look-out man's information was too vital to play with. Mac and his two officers kept conning and consulting their chart, and at odd intervals Mac would go up to the wheel and speak to Baldy concerning the course the latter was steering, not interfering with him but checking up his knowledge, and it was not long before a warm glow of confidence in his steersman began to permeate the being of McGlusky.

The wind was just right for their purpose, and after a little while it was plain to every man aboard the *Bonny Jean* that as soon as they rounded the big bluff they would be heading straight into the bay which was to be their port for the time being. All eyes were glued upon the rounded edges of the tall bluff that stood up so boldly as a landmark, and directly the bows of the *Bonny Jean* swung round in a line with the mouth of the tiny bay that lay beyond the bluff, all

hands aboard the *Bonny Jean* were filled with delight as they saw the canoes and kyaks that were being paddled about the bay by fur-clad natives.

"There's trade for us boys, anyway," cried McGlusky, and quite a hearty little cheer broke out from the lips of the roughneck crew, and Judy Hiscox, walking up to the side of the skipper, said:

"I understand your delight at the prospects of trade, McGlusky."

"Do you? Well, my lass, what do you think pleased me most?"

"Why, it is as plain as a Poor House pudding," laughed Judy. "You are pleased because the evidence in front of us of trade potentialities make your bluff with the Japanese that you have come here to trade seem a very real one. If any of the brown spies come nosing round this bay, and they are pretty certain to do just that, why they will see all hands belonging to the *Bonny Jean* pushing trade with the natives to the limit."

Baldy Jinks proved himself to be a number one top-hole steersman, and ran the *Bonny Jean* in between the points of the walls of the bay with the certitude of a mathematician. Even at its entrance the bay was narrow enough in all conscience, but towards its landward end it was so narrow that a man standing on the decks of a vessel could toss a biscuit ashore on either side of his craft. From this end, however, there ran a good deep river; which Baldy Jinks, who had been there a number of times, informed McGlusky, ran straight away to the hindermost part of the island and was kept deep enough to be navigable by the snow water that drained into it from either side from hills at the extreme end.

As soon as the *Bonny Jean* had dropped her anchor the natives came paddling round, and as none of them carried arms McGlusky permitted them to clamber

aboard, which they did with the agility of frolicsome monkeys, and soon the deck was cluttered up with a whole mob of natives eager to make friends and to trade. Turning to McGlusky, Judy Hiscox, who was a most observant young woman, remarked:

"These folks have done business with European shipowners plenty of times or I am a poor judge."

"Sure thing they have," came Mac's ready response, "and what is more they have not had the bad fortune to run into many of the worst type of trader. I can tell that by their fearlessness and their smiling faces. I have many a time pulled into a port where the natives only came aboard shyly; and after considerable pressure to do so had been put upon them by myself and the crew. And when they did come, they walked with one eye on the bulwarks, over which they could slip like startled ferrets, and we did not see many smiles upon the faces of such people, but frowning brows and treachery-dreading glances. Most of the trouble that has arisen between the natives in the islands and white folks arriving there has been caused by the brutal behaviour, and double-dealing conduct of men who go down to the sea in ships, but the natives always get the worst of it, and in the end the poor devils get the punishment."

"Well," laughed Judy, "just look at our men moving amongst these brown-skinned folk. They, at all events, are out to breed friendship, and that is as it should be."

"Every word you have said is gospel truth, Judy," retorted McGlusky, "but all the same I am glad to see that you yourself have guns and keep them handy. There never may be the faintest need for you to use them, but on the other hand these smiling faces may hide treachery, and in that case a couple of belt guns are the best warrant for safety, and well I know how you can use them."

"I can use my guns," smiled Judy, "and if the necessity arises I will use them, but you may be sure of this, McGlusky, I won't pull a gun if I can help it. I have been too well trained for foolery of that kind."

Soon the news of the arrival of the white men's barque had spread from the bay to the Settlement that lay a couple of miles inland along the banks of the river, and the whole of the inhabitants, it seemed to Mac and his men, came canoeing out to join in the gladsome welcome. As this fresh contingent put in an appearance Mac gave his orders to his officers and crew, saying:

"We've plenty of natives aboard ship as it is, don't let any of these new arrivals come aboard the *Bonny Jean*. We are sure to run into a Chief shortly and some of our boys will know a sufficiency of the language to convey to them that the crowd of natives on our decks at the present time will have to clear out before we allow a fresh contingent aboard."

Looking into McGlusky's face whilst he was speaking, Judy interpolated:

"Always careful, McGlusky, always careful. The nigger gang that catches you unready would catch a weasel asleep."

"Think so?" came the rapid-fire reply. "You're wrong, Judy. I have been caught and it is the memory of what has happened when a crowded deck of seemingly peaceful natives has suddenly turned into a living hell that makes me careful now, and will keep me careful until I die. Anyway, that is one of the advantages of experience."

When at last the first rush of excitement on the part of the natives had cooled down, McGlusky manned a couple of boats with selected men, and taking Judy Hiscox in the boat that he commanded himself, he made his way to the native Settlement that Baldy had assured him lay up river a distance of a couple of miles.

At odd intervals there were native huts which stood on both sides of the river's banks, and native men and women came dancing out from these homesteads to follow along the banks, waving their arms and gesticulating dramatically to the body of canoe-men that were following Mac and his boat.

All the white men were well armed but did not make any unnecessary display of their weapons. As soon as they reached the Settlement they were informed that signals had been sent out from the Chief's headquarters to all the outlying portions of the island informing the inhabitants that a white trader had anchored in the bay. Mac gave orders to his men that, whilst they were not to remain bunched in solid groups, they were not on any account to move about separately, as individual men might meet with trouble at any moment. Instead of there being any sign of mischief, the Chief prepared a great feast, and a general native celebration, to welcome the white men to their island, and one of the first things that McGlusky's keen eyes noticed was that amongst the natives there were a great number who were of almost pure Japanese extraction, and he learnt later that this was owing to the practice followed in all the islands where the Japanese had an opportunity of landing their men, their coolies had mated with the women, and had introduced the Japanese system of polygamy, and nearly every man had two, three, and often as many as six wives. This was no surprise to McGlusky himself, who had run against the same sort of thing in many other islands, but it was new to Judy Hiscox, and Mac explained to her the reason for polygamy, saying:

"This is one more of the cute moves made by the Mikado's advisers. They don't land an unlimited number of men, so as not to arouse the animosity of any white race that may have some sort of claim to suzerainty over the islands, and as regularly as the women

could produce children they had them, and those children were all without exception brought up to believe that they were part and parcel of the great Japanese nation, and in all essentials Japanese they were. This astute move on the part of the Japanese Government simply meant that without annexing the islands at all, the Japanese were in fact bringing them under the sway of the Mikado's flag by the best means possible, for nothing cements a native population to a big nation like ties of blood. Every child born to a Japanese father is raised in the belief that Japan is the greatest spot on earth, and the Mikado is held up to the eyes of every half-caste child as something akin to a god. By this means the power of the Japanese nation has increased by leaps and bounds throughout the length and breadth of the Pacific."

Remarking on this aspect of affairs to Judy Hiscox, McGlusky commented.

"No other nation is making any attempt to colonize the islands, and it is a foregone conclusion that if things go on as they are going now, in a few years the Mikado will own all the wonderful wealth-producing islands in this ocean, and will control every highway of the seas that are now open to Australia, and New Zealand, and will have those countries under the Mikado's thumb for good or evil, unless the over-weening ambition of the brown nation causes a general uprising of the principal maritime powers amongst the whites against Japan; in that case Japan as a first class power will be wiped clean off the map, there will be no half-way house. Japan as a first class military, naval, commercial and manufacturing nation will cease to exist."

After that rather vivid discussion that and other kindred subjects were dropped in the rush and bustle of the work of trading. The second morning after the *Bonny Jean* arrived at Arctic Bay, Ching How mysteriously disappeared. All the crew had seen the Chinese

paying rather volcanic court to a slim little native beauty who had come aboard to peddle some artistically worked furs. These furs were so beautiful that Miss Judy had secured for herself quite a quantity by barter, and all the officers had secured some as trophies to take back to civilization, for in their way they were unique. There was one fur in particular that had taken the fancy of McGlusky, a fur not quite unlike the lovely and rare real black opossum of Australia. This Arctic Bay fur was blacker than the Australian, and the fur was more closely woven, and was like nothing so much as massed silk closely packed on the pelt from the head to the point of the bushy tail.

"If the Queen who gets that fur from you, McGlusky," chaffed Judy, "pays you in kisses you ought not to go bankrupt for love tokens for many a long year."

Instantly all the granite sternness went out of Mac's leonine face and his keen eyes started jumping with a wicked kind of merriment. Holding out the loveliest of his furs, he said in a voice that was dancing with ill-suppressed chuckles: "Well, Miss Judy, we'll do a trade right now, you and I; you take the furs, and I'll come collect the dues on them, when the Arctic moon is riding high to-night."

Judy's eyes met the great adventurer's, and her own were bright as the northern lights that fill the heavens with radiance in those regions. For a moment or two, moments that were electric, the pair of dare devils of opposite sexes stood reading each other's souls and brains, then a scarlet flush seemed to burn Judy's face, and many things might have happened in that pregnant moment had not the second officer come barging in where angels might have feared to tread——

"Say, Skipper," he growled, "I can't find hide or hair o' that darned Chink o' ours. He has skipped out, and you yourself gave orders to all hands that

no one was to leave the ship without special permission."

"Sure I did," snapped McGlusky gruffly, for he did not in the least appreciate the second officer's butting in on his confidential conversation with Judy Hiscox.

"Well," came the second officer's equally gruff reply, "orders or no orders that chap has given the ship leg bail, he has hopped it."

"Do you mean," rasped Mac, "that Ching How has deserted the *Bonny Jean* and our expedition, eh?"

"It looks almighty like it to me, Skipper, and I don't mind telling you that from first to last from the day he joined us at Honolulu up to the present hour I never held half such a high opinion of him as you did."

"I know that without being told," riposted McGlusky. "You have shown your dislike to the Chinese boy in many ways, also your distrust of him."

"I can't stand any of the yellow or brown breeds at any price, and if you will pardon me for saying so, Skipper, I have always held that Ching How's presence on this vessel, considering the job we have in hand, was a mistake."

"If it was a mistake," snapped McGlusky, "then it was my mistake and I stand responsible for it whatever happens, so dinna fash yoursel', ma lad. I'll bet my brêeches that Ching How turns up again with a good and sufficient reason for his, at least suspicious, departure."

That interruption on the part of the second officer nipped in the bud what might have been a very happy episode in the life's record, not only of McGlusky himself but in that of the wild and wayward daughter of Wild Bill Hiscox and Calamity Jane. In the moment before the second officer's ill-omened interruption the pair had been standing very close together, and at that psychological instant their hearts and impulses were like tinder and steel, only wanting the spark of the

spoken word to have brought their lives very much closer together than they had been. Mac turned away to make some inquiries in regard to the progress of the trade that had been started, and Judy, throwing a rather snappy glance in the second officer's direction, went to attend to her business of entering up the trade that was being done in her well-kept books. Late that night the bos'n, dropping in upon McGlusky in his cabin, announced:

"No sign of the yellow boy, Ching How, aboard yet, sir. I thought," he added as he noticed something like a frown gathering on the brow of the skipper, "that you might like to know in case of something having happened to the Chink. I don't know a thing about this island, but I do know that it's not too wise for a stranger to go single-handed and alone woman hunting in any of these out-of-the-way places."

"Quite sure," almost drawled Mac, "that the Chink, as you call him, went ashore woman hunting?"

"What else would he be hunting?" grinned the bos'n. "I guess, Skipper, that yellow men, white men and black men for that matter, are all tarred with the same brush, and the particular woman that the Chink was elbowing up when he was last noticed aboard was a real good looking, and young and full of the devilment that lies so near the skin of many of these island women."

"Well, bos'n, don't lose any sleep to-night worrying about Ching How. You think he is woman hunting, and the second officer holds the opinion that he has deserted the expedition. Well, I don't quite agree with either of you, and am keeping an open mind concerning Ching How. In the first place, I think he has too great a love for me personally to slip away and leave me in the lurch, for he knows better than any of you know how valuable he has been to me in the past, and how useful he could be here. I'm trusting him. All

the same I appreciate your keenness. I know you did not come to make mischief; you're not that sort, bos'n."

"You may bet your teeth against a plug of tobacco, Skipper, that nothing was further from my mind than tale carrying. I like the Chink, and always have liked him, ever since he joined us at Honolulu. What I am afraid of is that the little blighter may have run into trouble, in which case he would be very liable to be clubbed to death, or speared, and be slipped somewhere out of sight in a hole in the ice, and none of us would ever be any the wiser concerning what had happened to him. I've seen a lot of dashed funny things in the islands during my lifetime, Skipper."

"Once again," smiled McGlusky, "I don't agree with you, bos'n. I think that little yellow lad has brains to burn in that sleek head of his, and I think he is far too wise to walk into any of the traps that sailor men are only too prone to fall into. I know he is only human the same as the rest of us, and the lure of a woman may blind his judgment and lead him into making a fool of himself, in which case, well he may get all that you fear is coming to him, and if he does, why he has only himself to blame. I should say the same concerning any member of my crew who walked into a wild cat's nest of that kind."

For nearly a week the mystery concerning the disappearance of Ching How grew and deepened until even McGlusky began to grow anxious.

"Funny thing," he remarked to Judy Hiscox, "how a fellow as smart and wide awake as Ching How could have been spirited away without leaving a single trace."

"There's another angle from which to view this mystery, McGlusky," came the earnest answer.

"What angle, Judy?"

"Well, Skipper, the Chinese boy may be anxious to remain here and is in hiding."

"There's only one reason that a sane person would

find to fit that theory, Judy, and that is the eternal woman theory."

"Why not?" almost purred Judy. "I saw the little native girl aboard to-day with whom Ching How was so thick the day he disappeared from the *Bonny Jean*. She looked a tempting little bit of she-material to me."

"I also saw the wee slut, to-day. She is even prettier than I thought her when I saw her first, and she is packed full of male allurements. She possesses the curse of a kissing mouth. She hadn't been aboard half an hour before she had started a quarrel between two of our men. Both the fools wanted to fix a date with her ashore, and she played one against the other, got some trade goods out of them both, for nothing, and left them with a fight on their hands, which they are sure to settle sooner or later, for women-made grudges are never forgotten until they are fought out by men. She had a real sunset smile on her pretty little mouth when she went over the side of the *Bonny Jean*."

"What softies," purred Judy with a twinkle in her eyes and the quirk of a smile round her generous lips. "Every man seems up and ready to make a ninety-seven per cent fool of himself directly he runs against a pretty face, and a pair of big eyes that can talk all languages, except the language of truth. I saw the quarrel you spoke of in the making and I could not help laughing at the cleverness of the dusky little daughter of sin."

"You thought her behaviour not just a case of native innocence, eh?" queried the big fellow.

"Native fiddlesticks!" Judy flung back at him. "That little underdressed beauty, child almost though she is, knows as much about original sin as Mother Eve did when she started out shopping for fig leaves."

"If that dusky damsel comes aboard to-morrow," remarked the skipper after thinking the situation over, "I think I'll clap her in limbo and threaten to take her

away on the *Bonny Jean* unless she clears up the fate of Ching How."

Judy shook her hands and head in reply to this threat and remarked:

"I don't think that little bronze beauty will squeal whatever you threaten her with, and you must remember, McGlusky, that we have not a shade of proof that she is at the bottom of the mystery concerning Ching How; that Oriental may have picked up some freak notion concerning the way he can best serve your interests, and if that is so the best thing to do is to just send out inquiring parties to try and discover his whereabouts, and otherwise to possess our souls in patience. It will take a lot to make me believe that Ching How has got himself into such a mess that he has had to pay for his folly with his life. Those Chinamen are women-fond, everyone knows that, but I have never heard of one of them running amok over any women. They seem to possess a thousand times more savvy and self-control in regard to the other sex than the white men of any breed that I have ever come in contact with."

Three more days passed and then McGlusky, who had been absolutely wrathful over his Chinese boy's uncanny removal from the sphere of action, decided that he would make a personal exploration of the Settlement where the natives hived so thickly. As he was about to go over the side into a native canoe that one of his crew had engaged for him, a little native, disgustingly dirty and looking about as old as the ancient hills, came clambering up the ship's ladder laboriously and so slowly that McGlusky, who was waiting to descend, shook the rope ladder vigorously in order to hurry the progress of the climber. But the figure, instead of climbing faster, clung to the ladder desperately, and raising its voice uttered a piteous sound of fear, which surprised the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* considerably, because he had

over and over again noticed the almost ape-like agility of the natives in clambering up and down his vessel's sides.

"What the devil is the matter with the native now?" growled McGlusky, because his temper was by this time thoroughly on edge, as he was most keen to leave the island, and make for the next one to continue his trading efforts. The creature, who looked more like a good-sized ape than a man, raised his face towards the skipper and uttered wailing cries.

"Sure," growled McGlusky to the men who were standing by him, "that native on the ladder must be sick, or he wouldn't behave as he is doing."

"I think," said Baldy Jinks, who was near by, "that man is suffering from the worst kind of complaint that can get any man, white or native, he's got a bad attack of anno domini, Skipper."

"I shouldn't wonder if you're right, now I come to look at him the poor old devil is suffering from old age, but what's the meaning of the big bunch of canoes hanging round almost underneath the feller on the ladder? The natives seem as much mystified as we are."

"I dunno what ails that poor little swine, Skipper," cried Moonshine, the nigger cook, "but I'll shin down that ladder and catch him by the scruff of the neck and haul him on deck. God bless my soul, there isn't enough o' him to make haulage for a one-armed man."

"Get to it quickly," was Mac's terse order, and the nigger Moonshine, who was as nimble as any baboon that ever disported itself in the woods, shinned down the ladder, grabbed the little old derelict of humanity by the back of its hair and the nape of its neck and very soon deposited it, none too gently, over the side and on to the deck of the *Bonny Jean*. McGlusky, looking at the quaint mass of dirt and semi-deformity that squirmed on the deck, spat over the side disgustedly,

and then, touching the derelict with the toe of his boot very gently, he cried to Judy Hiscox:

"Here, Judy, what in God's name do you make of this? If there was such a thing as a missing link to be found on this island I should say that this creature had sprung from it. It looks like half ape, and I'm not too sure what the other half is."

The creature had by this time dropped to its hands and knees and had crawled from McGlusky to the feet of Judy Hiscox, and having arrived there it promptly dropped its forehead first on one foot and then the other of the young woman, and looking up into her face made supplicating gestures with its hands.

"I don't know what the poor things needs, I am sure," exclaimed Judy, "but it is in dire trouble of some sort. I think myself it is scared to death of the natives who are in the canoes and on the ship."

"I think," said the second officer, "that what this animal needs is a good bath first of all. I'd lay it out on the deck and turn the ship's hose on it, Skipper, if I was you, and perhaps when you have washed some of that infernal dirt away from it it will feel better. Anyway, it jolly well can't feel any worse."

McGlusky negated this proposition, and as he did so Moonshine, who like most African negroes brought up in white surroundings possessed a very kind streak in his nature, went and knelt beside the strange visitor, and the creature responding at once to his kindly action, took hold of both his hands and drew his face down, and it seemed to those who watched that the lips of the derelict moved whilst close to the ears of Moonshine. Anyway the nigger cook rose almost at once, and turning to McGlusky he said in a whisper:

"Skipper, I'll take this thing that has come aboard the ship into my cook's galley, and——" He dropped his voice to a lower whisper: "Sir, if I were you I'd

clear out every native and come and look into this matter o' the derelict myself."

McGlusky who knew that there was not a fool's bone in the negro's body, knew in fact that under his ever-jocular antics, and expressions, there dwelt a very cute brain, simply nodded an affirmative, and Moonshine picking up the strange-looking little creature by the scruff of its neck brought it to the cook's galley, and a moment later McGlusky commanded all the natives that were aboard the *Bonny Jean* should at once be ordered to their canoes, and this was done, although the natives demurred strongly. As soon as the decks were cleared of native visitors, McGlusky went direct to the cook's galley, and the moment he entered, the queer little old fellow with the dark brown face rose up to meet him, and speaking in perfect if rather stilted English, said:

"If Honourable Sir will condescend to listen whilst this So Humble One speaks, I will explain things that are dark and make plain roads that are full of pitfalls."

McGlusky had to look a long time at the filthy little image before his eyes could quite believe his ears. His ears told him plainly enough that the nondescript creature in front of him was the missing member of his crew, Ching How. But his eyes could scarce credit the evidence of his ears.

"What the devil is the meaning of this conduct, Ching How?" he demanded at last, and Ching How unbosomed himself, saying:

"The small native girl who sold the Illustrious One the rich furs told me that there was on this island a man who was like your humble servant, Ching How, but a much older man."

"Another Chinaman, eh?" interpolated McGlusky.

"Another Chinaman, yes Illustrious One, and a prisoner. The native girl said he had been a prisoner for many years by order of the Japanese, and she offered to take this So Stupid One to see him, so I went."

"You went without my permission," rasped McGlusky.

The celestial made an all-embracing gesture of assent and said:

"He was my countryman, alone, Honoured Sir, alone, helpless, and wishing to see some Chinaman before he died—so This Insignificant One listened to the call of the blood and—went. The girl, Honoured Sir, took me where I could disguise myself, else I too would have been a prisoner for life, or——" Ching How made a dramatic gesture intimating a speedy ending to his own career. McGlusky was more deeply moved by Ching How's loyalty to the call of the blood than he cared to make evident, and growled:

"Aboard ship a man's first duty is to his ship and his shipmates." Ching How, who had remained kneeling at the skipper's feet, prostrated himself, and touching the floor with his forehead, he lifted one of the skipper's feet and put it on his own neck.

"Hell," growled McGlusky, and, stooping, he lifted the dirty, dilapidated Chinese to his feet and said: "Stand up, Ching How, Australian fashion, man to man, and tell me your story, and tell it quickly and truthfully, hiding nothing."

"Nothing shall be hidden from the All Wise One," murmured Ching How. "This is the way of things, Honourable Sir. I disguised myself in part aboard the *Bonny Jean* and slipped away in the crowd of natives when the little native girl who sold you the furs went, and she, as I told you before, showed me a place where I could disguise myself so that no native could recognize me as Ching How of the white man's ship. I am a past master of disguises, Honoured Sir, for that was amongst the things that Quong Sioue-e-e, the devil doctor of Honolulu, taught to your So Dishonoured Servant. When I had disguised myself the native girl took me, when the night had fallen, after your So Stupid

One had made much love to her, to the place where the Chinese prisoner lives, and has lived for many many years, just how many he could not tell me and I could not guess. He was chained by one ankle to a stake driven into the floor of his hut. When he saw me he did not recognize me as a Chinese. My disguise was so good that he thought I was one of the lowest class of natives, but recognizing him by his colour and his features as a Chinese, I spoke to him in the language of my people and he went nearly mad, when I had explained to him that I was the Humble Servant of your Honourable Self, and had come at the call of the girl to hear his story, and see if anything could be done for him. It was a long story that he told me, which I will not inflict upon the So Generous One's patience, sufficient to say that he had been kidnapped from China, where he had started to follow his profession as engineer, he having been educated for that profession in America.

"The men who kidnapped him were Japanese agents, and they wanted him because he was military engineer and genius trained at the expense of the Chinese Government to teach Chinese students military engineering. He was reputed to be clever and for that reason he was selected as a captive."

"What in the name of sin itself," ejaculated McGlusky, "could these natives, and Japanese, require of a military engineer here on this island on the edge of the Arctic?"

"That is a mystery, Honourable Sir, that I have been able to discover, and which I now lay at the feet of the So Great One, hoping thereby to win pardon for the disgrace of having deserted my post."

"Get on with it!" McGlusky flung these words full into the teeth of Ching How, and his eyes, following his words, bored straight into the soul of the Chinese, to find out whether he was being fooled by a

specious story, or whether the tale he was to hear was a true tale. Very swiftly and with amazing coherence Ching How told him the story of a great tragedy.

"The old Chinaman brought here, Honourable Sir, was to assist the Japanese in their laying out fortifications for this island."

"They don't own the island, why the blazes should they fortify what they do not own?" demanded McGlusky.

"No, Honourable One, they do not own the island—yet, but the Japanese always look long way ahead, and they look ahead to the time that is not now far distant when they will hoist the Japanese flag over this island, and to that end they have mapped out all the places where fortifications will be erected. They have laid all the foundations for their fortresses, they go so deep and they are so strong that they will carry the walls of fortresses that will be able to repulse the artillery of any American or British warship that may attack them, and they have very deep concrete beds for carrying the heavy guns that will be used in the forts. All this has taken them years to do, and it has been done so secretly that not a whisper of it has been allowed to leak out. They have not put down the foundations for the forts, or the concrete emplacements for the big guns near the little bay in which the *Bonny Jean* is anchored. They were too careful to do that, for fear that some white sailor going from, or arriving there, might discover their work. All the rest of the island has been mapped and surveyed and the aged Chinaman told me that when he refused to give of his knowledge he was tormented by them, and the scars on his body prove that his tale was a true tale, he has gone through the great Gehenna, that old Chinaman. Honoured Sir, I can quite understand if the Japanese have such a deeply planned military and naval secret they would not stick at anything to carry it through to

a successful issue, for there are no half measures about the brown men, if they are anything they are thorough to the core. They have now finished their preparations and they are nearly ready to hoist the flag of Japan over this island."

"Why did you not bring the old Chinaman away with you when you were escaping after you had heard his story?"

"He did not want to come, Gracious Sir. His life has nearly run its course, and he hates with the hate of hell, and he would rather stay where he is, and see the accomplishment of his revenge, and laugh in the faces of those who have humiliated and tormented him, than he would escape and have a few years, or perhaps even only a few months of freedom. It is for you, the Great and Important One, to help the Chinaman to his vengeance."

"How?"

"By telling, Honoured Sir, the secret that I have brought to you to the ears of the American, the Australian, and the British governments, and they will, unless the gods have afflicted them altogether with stupidity, fly one of their flags over these islands and claim them as their heritage, and so bring to naught all that the Japanese have done here."

"That is something like a revenge," chuckled McGluskus.

Having heard Ching How's story, the skipper paced his deck in deep meditation for half an hour, considering his line of action. Then he called Judy Hiscox into consultation in his cabin. After telling her all he had learned from Ching How, he said in the direct manner that was habitual with him in a crisis:

"Judy, we have got to get out of Arctic Bay on the jump."

"Why?" Judy's fighting blood, the blood of Wild Bill Hiscox and Calamity Jane was on the boil. She

ought to have been a man, not a woman and a charming one.

"Why?" riposted McGlusky. "Because if the Japanese who are on this island masquerading as natives guess we have discovered their secret, they will get a crowd together, and rush the *Bonny Jean*, and good as my crew of roughnecks are, they will be overborne by numbers, and we will be wiped out to the last man, and the *Bonny Jean* will be taken out into deep water and scuttled. The Japs were once, not so very long ago, the greatest breed of sea pirates in the Eastern Seas, and they will revert to first principles again on less provocation than we are offering them now."

"Doesn't the American flag count for a thing then, McGlusky?"

"Not a thing, Judy. The Americans are too busy dollar hunting at present to think nationally, but the pride of race will awaken in them some day. The Japanese are out to build up an empire in the Pacific, and they won't let a little matter like the wiping out of a few free traders like ourselves stop them, or even hinder them in what you and I must confess is a glorious Japanese dream."

"Glorious perhaps, McGlusky, but—damn it all, I hate this kow-towing to an Asiatic breed. It hurts, yes, by the Lord it hurts."

"If, Judy," answered McGlusky, "you had made a deep and peculiar study of empire building as I have done, you would know that in the history of the world, ancient and modern, all the big nations have done in the past what the Japs are doing here to-day—the Romans at their zenith did it, the Spaniards did it also in their day of glory, and the British did it also. They looted about half the world to paint their map red, and America has done a bit of land piracy as well. See how the Americans grabbed the Phillipines, and they'll grab anything else that they need later on. We must

be fair to the Japs whilst we are opposing them tooth and nail; fair, I mean," echoed McGlusky, "in the sentiments we express concerning them when talking to one another. They are only doing what every great power the world has ever known has done before them and will go on doing till the end of time. All the same I am going to do my level best to put a spoke in the Japs' wheel concerning this attempt of theirs to steal the Arctic islands and the two islands adjacent thereto, unless I am gravely mistaken."

Judy had been listening with concentrated attention and she now broke in saying:

"How—how will you stop them, Skipper McGlusky?"

Leaning right forward, so that his face was very close to that of the charming woman to whom he had been unburdening himself so freely, McGlusky said emphatically:

"There is only one way to stop them, Judy, and we will be dependent very greatly upon the tricks of chance to bring that trick off."

"Name your play, McGlusky," answered Judy, "and remember that two heads are better than one even if one is a woman's."

"This is my idea of the only thing that can be done under the circumstances. I shall swing the *Bonny Jean* out of this bay as soon as I can straighten things out; which will only take an hour or so to do, and I shall make for the next island belonging to this group, and whilst doing a little trade with the natives there I shall keep my eyes skinned for the sight of another trader. There are, so I have been informed, quite a number of Canadian vessels that trade with these three islands, and we may, by the grace of God, have the good luck to run into one of them, and in that case, Judy, I am going to put you aboard the Canadian craft, or any other that is travelling towards the American continent."

"Put me aboard, McGlusky, not on your life, sir. I came with you to see this sealing venture through and I mean to do it."

"That so, Judy? Well, I'm disappointed in you and that's plain, straight Australian talk."

"Why?" demanded Judy with a flush in her face that heralded a rising temper.

"Because," almost drawled McGlusky, "I thought you were an American citizen first, and a money-lusting trader afterwards."

"You don't mince your phrases, McGlusky," came the rapid fire retort.

"No, I never do, Judy, either to man or woman."

"So you think I am nothing but a money-lusting, dollar-hunting she-shopkeeper, eh, Skipper McGlusky?"

"If you stick to the views you expressed to me when I told you that I intended to put you aboard a vessel travelling to the American continent, why yes, that's my opinion, stated plainly, Judy."

"Then you are a bigger fool than I thought you were," came the snappy answer. "Do you think I came on this trip for the sake of the dollars there might be in it? If so, you little knew Judy Hiscox. I have more money now than I know what to do with. I came on this venture for the sake of the devilment of it, and now you want, at the critical moment, just when the real spunky adventure is about to commence, to throw me down as though I was a serving lass you had employed to do your bidding. No, sir, you can't do it. I will not stand for it."

"Very well," rasped McGlusky, speaking with a curling lip and the ring of a sneer in his voice, "I'll have to trust to the gods of luck, and send one of my officers to do the errand that I should have thought any American woman would have felt honoured at being selected to perform. I can't very well spare an officer,

and besides I had imagined somehow, that you would be far more reliable, and far more astute, and would know how to go about doing a job like this better than any man I have aboard my ship."

"What is there difficult about the task, Skipper McGlusky, that any officer or man of yours could not perform? You could write a letter and give it to a messenger and so convey any information that you want the American Government to receive on that matter."

"Just think it over for a moment," retorted McGlusky emphatically. "This is an almighty important affair. I want a messenger who can get to the ear of no less a person than the President of the United States, and explain fully just what the Japanese are doing here in this island, and warn him that unless he hoists the American flag over this group of islands, the Japs will do so in the immediate future, and not only can you tell the President that, but tell him what you have heard from me concerning the fortifying of this island where we are now located. I could not put all that in any letter. I could not by writing impress the President, or any leading statesman, sufficiently to make them act with speed, and with speed they must act to make the action fit the occasion."

"Is that the only reason why you want to get me off the *Bonny Jean*, Skipper McGlusky?"

A flush grew on the face of the skipper, but he rose nobly to the occasion and lied like a veritable prince of liars.

"I have no other reason, why should I desire to get rid of you at this stage of our adventures?"

Judy stood looking at him as if she only believed him to oblige him, and the impatient manner in which she tapped the floor with one of her shapely feet, spoke for the difficulty she had in controlling her rather volatile temper.

"I thought," she murmured angrily, "that you might have some fool idea of putting me out of danger."

"What danger?"

"The danger of the *Bonny Jean* being shelled by a Jap patrol. I know that you of late have been considering such a happening more than probable, am I right or am I wrong?"

"You are right, Judy, in regard to what you say in reference to the probability of the *Bonny Jean* being shelled; you are wrong in thinking that was my reason for getting rid of you."

Slowly the flush of anger died from Judy's face.

"Very well," she exclaimed, "if you can find a ship to take me I'll go to America; it happens that one of the most powerful legislators, who is a personal friend of the President's, is a very close friend of mine, and he carries the whole weight of the Western States behind him. I might have been something closer than a friend to the legislator if I had been so inclined. I'll use all the influence I possess to get the Americans to send a cruiser to these islands to hoist the American flag here. I am stung to death to think these brown men can grab islands at their pleasure—— I suppose," she added, "that if we let them seize a mandate over these islands, it won't be very long before they will have the audacity to refuse American citizens permission to even land on the islands, so swollen are their heads getting."

"I will do this thing you want me to do because it is my duty to my country to do it, but, Skipper McGlusky, if I find out later that you have fooled me to get me out of danger, I'll just despise you and dislike you as much as I despise you."

Moving like a streak of blue lightning McGlusky was close to the angry bunch of womanliness before she realized his intentions, for not one big man in millions could move as fast as Mac could when he was stirred.

The next moment he had Judy in his arms and the things he did to her mouth it would be a shame to talk about in print. Whether Judy liked the way the half-bred buccaneer ravished her mouth can only be guessed at. She did not pull one of her belt guns, but she boxed his ears in a manner that would have made a prize-fighter envious of her strength and speed of action, whilst Mac stood looking as foolish as a boy caught looting a candy store. At that critical moment, Moonshine, the nigger cook, entered the cabin to announce dinner, and the grin on the nigger's face would have cracked a clock as he stood envisaging the scene.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LOVE BUG BITES MCGLUSKY

THE *Bonny Jean* had left Arctic Bay well behind her and was running before a ten knot breeze in the direction of the central island of the group of three when a sailing ship, that seemed to be none too well handled, came athwart them, evidently making for the island the *Bonny Jean* had just left, and she looked as if she were coming from the island that the *Bonny Jean* was making for. Mac and his officers promptly turned their glasses on the stranger, for every vessel in those waters that were known to be infested by parties of the Japanese patrol was suspect to skippers with uneasy consciences.

"What do you make of her?" demanded McGlusky. "Looks," he added, "a bit too determined that we shan't get a good look at their outfit to be healthy to me."

"A bit too darned slovenly also to be genuine," grumbled the first officer.

"I'd like a chance to take a peep below her decks before I'd bet a month's pay on her character, Skipper," vouchsafed the second officer.

"I'd bet one sea boot and one leg o' my best pants I could name her trade and profession," smiled McGlusky. "She's a sea shyster or my brains are made of mutton fat. See that stiff-built little feller standing close to the man at the wheel? He's sure got Jap naval officer carved all over him in spite of the nondescript rig he's wearing."

At that moment Baldy Jinks came up to the officers and said, after hooking a big plug of tobacco from his cheek:

"Beg pardin, Skipper——"

"Spit it out, Baldy. What bug is biting you?"

The sailor, who was every inch a seaman of the old school, gave a scrape with one foot, and touching his grizzled forelock he stood, jerking a thumb in the direction of the dirty and untidy craft that was passing, and said quickly:

"I knows that craft, sir. Couldn't mistake her if I saw her carryin' a cargo of angels' wings."

"What is she—what do you think she is, Baldy?"

"Don't know who she calls 'ersel' to-day, Skipper, but she is a Jap patrol in disguise. Don't you be fooled by the lubberly way the crew is handling her, there ain't a smarter officer than 'er commander, nor a slicker Jap crew nowheres between Cape Cod an' the coasts o' hell, and her proper flag is the rising sun o' Japan, and her commander is Captain Sattoo, of the Mikado's navy, now detailed to the secret patrol. He is as cunning as the devil, and as brave as a bull bison."

"They are all brave, those who are of the Samurai," cried McGlusky. "They are going," he added, "to carve a niche for themselves in the world's history, those brown naval men."

"Begging your pardin, sir," spoke Baldy, who knew by past experience that he could get the ear of his skipper at any time. "I'm thinking, sir, there's a heap too much darned fuss made all over the white world these days concerning the pluck of the Japanese naval men. I think that if ever the Japs buck against the navy of Uncle Sam they are going to get half the gold lace and tinselled stuff knocked from their reputation."

"The Russians didn't knock much of the gold lace off," riposted McGlusky.

"No," exclaimed Baldy, who stood for a couple of

minutes spitting out curses that were sultry enough to blister the seams of the *Bonny Jean*. Then pulling himself up he apologized for this breach of etiquette, and then added: "It sure makes me wild to hear white men singing the praises of these Japs as they do these days. I remember things in that there Russo-Jap war that not many seem to know much about now, for, Skipper, I was in Chemulpo Harbour when that war broke out (and the writer of this chronicle wasn't far away either*). I was aboard an American cruiser. I was A.B. in those days, and what I saw in the harbour of Chemulpo will remain with me till I goes to Davy Jones's locker. There was a whole gang of warships of all nations in Chemulpo Harbour, and amongst the warships there was a cruiser called *The Variag*, and a little old gunboat called *The Koretza*, and they both belonged to Russia, and were flying the Russian flag. Suddenly the news was passed amongst all the ships that war had broken out between Russia and Japan, and this was verified almighty soon, because up came the Jap Rear-Admiral Reniw with his whole fleet under him, and he announced that war had broken out between Russia and Japan, and he demanded that the Russian cruiser, *The Variag*, and the gunboat, *The Koretza*, should surrender to him or come out and fight, otherwise he would come in and sink them.

"Now Chemulpo was a neutral port, and most of us sailor fellers thought that the Russians had a right to sanctuary there, but all the other nations agreed that there was nothing for the Russians to do but to surrender or to do the mad thing, go out and fight. That's just what that Russian commander did, he went out with his colours flying at the gaff, and his band playing the national anthem of Russia, and all his men standing at their posts, and the Japs immediately opened with every gun they possessed upon the two ships that

* This incident is authentic history, the author vouches for it.

were facing death and destiny so bravely. I know it was war, Skipper, but it was the grandest and the most awful sight that I have ever set eyes on, and the two Russians did their darndest to fight back against the whole fleet, but the little gunboat, which was too old to put up a fight of any sort, fell away, whilst the cruiser fought, battling bravely against the whole fleet of Japan's picked warships for an hour and a half, and at the end of that time her decks were all cluttered up with dead and wounded officers and men, and then to make matters worse the cruiser burst into flames fore and aft, and then, but not till then the Russian Commander swung his ship around and battled his way back to port in order that his wounded men might not be burned alive, and as the Russians came back to port the men of every warship in that harbour manned the yards, and gave him as hearty a cheer as ever rang up to the halls of the gods from the lips of sinful men, and instantly all of us got orders to put off in our boats, and go and try and save as many wounded as possible from that flaming 'ell, and I was one who went, and to the day I die I shan't cease to be proud of what I was able to do, Skipper.

"We were just in time to save most of the wounded, and to toss the dead overboard, when the Russian cruiser, dipping her bows as though they were saluting God Almighty, dived underneath the ocean and went to her glorious resting place. What do you think of that, Skipper, for guts, eh? Could the Japs at their best beat it?"

"No, by the Eternal, no," responded McGlusky with all an Australian's pride in his voice, pride in the white races. "But," he added, "how do you account for the gallantry of the officers and crew of *The Variag* when you come to think of the cowardly part played by so many other Russian commanding officers and ships' companies against the Japs, Baldy?"

"I knows something about that, sir," came the rugged answer. "The Japs, before war was declared, had got to some of the commanding officers of the Russian navy, and had bribed the dogs with enormous sums of money to play the traitor and the coward, and by God they earned their money, the curs, for traitors and cowards they proved themselves to be, but give the Russian sailor a brave, true man to lead him, and he'll fight as well as any white man that breathes the breath of life. Take it from me, sir, I knows. I've been there and I've seen 'em do it."

"Well," remarked McGlusky, "there isn't money enough in God's good world to enable the Japs to bribe the officers of the American navy if it ever comes to trouble between those two peoples."

"You're right there, Skipper," cried Baldy, "and it won't be a case of one ship's crew being ready to die to the last man when the Yankees battle for mastery, every blame man that wears the American uniform, from blue jacket to admiral, will fight till he dies, and be proud o' the chance o' doing so if it comes to a struggle with the brown breed, as come it will, or I'm a wall-eyed he-idiot."

"I hope you're a bad prophet in regard to the coming of the war, Baldy, for it will be just sheol for both sides. My own opinion is that if the American and Japanese fleets meet in a death grapple the white man will win, win every time, but the Japs will put up a right glorious fight," added McGlusky.

"I hopes I'll be alive and 'earty and able to find a place aboard a Yankee ship when that war you're speaking of comes off, sir. I'd like to go to 'eaven that way, I would."

"Feel pretty certain, do you, Baldy, of the last port you'll strike?" chuckled McGlusky.

"Sure I am, Skipper. A sailor man that goes to Davy Jones's locker doing 'is duty by 'is country, 'e's a

darned sight surer of an 'arp and crown than a lot of land lubbers who go round worrying about their immortal souls and makin' faces at their sins, an' pretendin' they didn't like 'em."

"I like your philosophy and religion, Baldy," said McGlusky, "but the Japanese patrol boat is nearly hull down on the horizon now. So away to your duty, let's have no more talk of war. I'm a timid man and hate the thought of such matters."

As Baldy Jinks, hitching up his trousers, strolled away, he said to a big deep-sea sailor, and chuckled to himself as he said it:

"Skipper McGlusky's a timid old sort o' bloke. Gawd help the Jappy man who ever runs against him in a fight, specially if he's leadin' a bunch o' his Australian angels, that's all."

As Baldy Jinks took his departure McGlusky remarked to his officers and Judy Hiscox, who had joined the group:

"I'd give a pig's ear to know if there is any vessel hereabouts that the Jap patrol is on the look-out for. It has been whispered to me that the Japs shrewdly suspect the Canadian craft that visit these waters of having designs on their seal preserves, and if that is correct, why I don't want to put Miss Judy on a suspected boat, that's all."

Judy flared up at this, saying:

"I'm not a little bit of Dresden china goods, Skipper McGlusky. I won't break as easily as you may think I will. Just let me alone, please, to take my chance, and put me on the first boat that is shaping towards the American Continent, otherwise I shall be changing my opinion of you, and begin to think that you are more of a mollycoddle than a man."

The two officers listening to this unfriendly speech looked in amazement, first at the young Amazon, and then at the skipper. Perhaps they would have been less

surprised if they had witnessed the amorous interlude that had begun when McGlusky, acting on a crazy impulse, had taken the Amazon in his arms and had poached a whole meal of burning-hot kisses. The ending of that bit of love piracy also would have startled them, for McGlusky's ears still rang from the flailing they had received, and would ring for many a day. At last the *Bonny Jean* picked up the second island, and there rocking lazily on the dancing waters of the harbour rode a stout three-masted sailing ship that flew from her peak the flag of Canada.

"Drop anchor as near that kanuck as possible," commanded McGlusky, and his sternly-trained crew obeyed like clockwork, and as soon as this was attended to, Mac ordered a boat to be lowered, and he and Judy getting into the boat were soon dancing across the wavelets, and in short order were looking up at the row of cheerful faces that lined the bulwarks of the *Maple Leaf*, for that was the name of the Canadian craft. The captain of the Canadian sailing ship gave McGlusky a hearty welcome, for the world wanderer was as well known in Canada as he was in Australia or Great Britain. Over a friendly glass in the skipper's cabin, McGlusky outlined his desires in regard to a passage for Judy Hiscox.

"I'm just headin' for home," replied the Canadian, "but fear I have no accommodation aboard this craft for ladies. At a pinch I might make room for a male passenger, but a lady, it's out of the question on this small craft."

"You knocked about on the western borders of America, didn't you, my Canadian friend?" demanded McGlusky.

"Sure I did and I liked the life, but I was a younger man in those days, and maybe I wouldn't like the rough, tough element now as I did then if I had the chance o' returning and mingling with it."

"Well," replied Mac, grinning cheerfully, "I haven't a shadow of doubt that whilst you were on the Western Borders you heard tell of a hard citizen named Wild Bill Hiscox, eh?"

"Good Lord, yes, I've heard of him and I met him two or three times. By Jove, there was a man if you like, McGlusky. Talk about wild devilment, that man was full of it, but he was a straight shooter, that feller, and a dashed fine figure of a man. I can picture him now sitting his splendid mustang with the ease and grace of a Comanche Indian, his long yellow hair flying in the breeze behind him, and his big six guns sticking out of his belt ready for use."

"Well," drawled McGlusky in the quizzical manner which he so often adopted when about to spring a surprise upon his hearers, "well, that Wild Bill Hiscox was the father of the lady passenger whom I want you to take aboard, and," interrupting the Canadian skipper's ejaculations of surprise, Mac added: "Not only did you hear of Wild Bill Hiscox in your stormy days, my friend, but you must have heard of Calamity Jane, the hen mail-coach driver who shot her way on a dozen occasions through the ranks of desperadoes who attempted to stick up the coach she was driving."

"Calamity Jane!" almost gasped the Canadian. "Why, snakes alive, she was, if possible, more of a mouthful than Wild Bill himself. What about her?"

"Nothing much," chuckled McGlusky, "except that she was the mother of the passenger I want you to take."

"Ring off, McGlusky," jeered the Canadian. "What are you trying to palm off on me now, the contents of a dime novel, eh?"

"Novel? Nothing," replied McGlusky honestly. "The lady I want you to take care of is the woman I have said she is. She was introduced to me by Jack London, the writer, and she came on a cruise with me,

but for reasons which I need not trouble to explain to you, except to say that they are of the most vital importance to the American nation. Miss Judy Hiscox must have a passage aboard this ship of yours, so that she may be landed where she can rapidly set foot on American soil."

"If what you are telling me is a true bill, McGlusky, by the Lord I'll vacate my own cabin for the daughter of Wild Bill Hiscox and Calamity Jane. Of course I know all that was said against both of them, but take them by and large they were a wonderful pair of pioneers, and there wasn't a mean streak in either of them."

"There isn't a mean streak in their daughter either, let me assure you, and she can keep her end up just as surely as could her mother, Calamity Jane, and neither her father nor her mother could unload a gun with more speed and accuracy than can this young woman, if the use of a gun is made a necessity."

"She won't have to use her guns on the *Maple Leaf*, you can bet your next crop of whiskers on that, McGlusky. Send her aboard, and do it smartly, because I want to get on my way. There has been a lousy Japanese patrol boat hanging about in these waters lately, and thank the Lord I have nothing aboard," he grinned heartily, "not this trip anyway, McGlusky, so if they do come nosing round they won't have a thing on me or my ship or my passengers."

"You are making straight for home, eh?" queried Mac.

"That's my line of march, sonny. I can't see the shores of good old Canada one hour too soon for me."

"Well," came Mac's cheery reply, "I'll just remove myself from the scenery, and we'll hoist Miss Judy aboard. She is in the boat that is lying alongside this vessel of yours."

"The devil you say! Why the thunder didn't you

bring her aboard with you when you came over the side yourself, McGlusky?"

"The lady had her own opinion about that. She has put her luggage ready in the boat in case you might be able to take her, but she would not come aboard unless you personally gave her a welcome."

"Jest my cursed luck," snarled the Canadian skipper. "I haven't shaved for three days, an' a bonnie lass coming aboard in a hurry. You said she was bonnie, didn't you, Mac?"

"I did not say so, but she is. You needn't trouble to shave, old son. Just you get a bit fresh with her and she'll do the shaving."

"That," responded the Canadian skipper, "is a crack that is soon mended. No one will get fresh with her aboard the *Maple Leaf*."

Ten minutes later, Judy Hiscox, standing upon the deck of the homeward-bound vessel, was wishing McGlusky a formal farewell. She did not offer to shake hands with him, and at that McGlusky, screwing up his courage and holding out his hand, said:

"Won't you give me your hand, Miss Judy?"

"Yes, Captain McGlusky, I will give you my hand, in the same way that I gave it you the last time we were alone together. I'll not give it you in any other way."

McGlusky shook his big head dolefully, remarking:

"If those are your last words, Miss Judy, then I don't want your hand. I'm not a bit sorry for what I did, but I'm darned sorry for the way I did it. I should have asked your permission before I——"

"—Before you behaved like a common buccaneer," snapped Judy. Then, as she turned upon her heel, she said: "I'll wish you a successful termination to your cruise, and a speedy meeting for a dividend of the spoil at Frisco."

"The dividend will be on hand, Miss Judy, if I'm

alive to render it. Don't have any fear on that score."

"I have no fear on that score. It's not your honesty I doubt but—your clumsy courting instincts. You court like a bull bison, McGlusky." Then she whipped out an expression that did not fall too nicely from the lips of a handsome woman, and flashing him a glance backwards over her shoulder she went her way to join the officers of the *Maple Leaf*, who were tumbling over one another to meet Wild Bill Hiscox's daughter.

As McGlusky was standing aboard the *Bonny Jean* that lay at anchor, the *Maple Leaf*, with all sails set, came drifting slowly past, waiting for a wind that would pick her up as soon as she got outside the harbour. Mac uttered a command, and every man of every colour aboard his ship leaped to the yards and cheered until the wild waters of that ice-bound coast rang and echoed to the thunder of their voices. So in that manner Judy Hiscox and McGlusky parted for that time, and for a day or two afterwards the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* was not a nice man for any of the natives of the island, or his own crew, to fall foul of, for his temper was as brittle as broken glass.

"By glory," muttered Baldy to a shipmate, "I'd as soon go over the side and make love to a baby seahorse as I'd bump the skipper in the mood he is in. I dunno what's biting him but if it's the love bug, why I'm glad it ain't me he's fallen in love with."

Mac did not keep the *Bonny Jean* long in that harbour. His trading efforts were of the shortest, and ere long he had the barque nosing out of the harbour with her bows pointing towards the third and final island of the Arctic group. When he dropped anchor by the low shelving coast of that third island, he got what must have been a pleasant surprise, for lying close handy was the craft that he and all his crew recognized at a glance as Skipper Starboard's old iron tub, the *Dirty Jane*.

That Captain Starboard recognized the *Bonny Jean* even before she dropped anchor was made manifest by the fact that he had a boat lowered and his men pulling lustily towards the *Bonny Jean* before the latter's anchor had fairly bitten into the sea bottom. The meeting between the pair was about as casual as if they had parted only the day before, for neither of them were demonstrative personages. The nods of a pair of heads, the clasp of two right hands and a greeting: "How goes it, Old Timer?" and that was all.

The confab that followed in McGlusky's cabin lasted a good hour, and a fair portion of that time was taken up by the cursing of the Japs by Skipper Starboard.

"They are past praying for now, McGlusky, these brown blighters. They have overhauled me and finding nothing aboard me that they could take exception to, they abused me and my men and did every mortal thing they could to pick a row, because I haven't a crew aboard that would stand an earthly show in a scrap with the picked men of the patrol. Lord send the day when they may overstep the mark and strike trouble with our American navy; they'll get all that's coming to them the day that happens, McGlusky. These brown blighters are suffering from swollen heads and they will bite off more than they can chew when they rouse Uncle Sam from his long sleep."

"That's my opinion also," growled McGlusky, "but it won't do us any good to talk about it. Now let us fix our arrangements. Are you of the same mind as you were when we parted in Honolulu in regard to acting as a store house for any seal pelts that I can poach?"

"Of the same mind, yes; that's why I am here. I had figured out that you would strike these islands about this time, and I shall go cluttering about like an old hen with the *Dirty Jane*, trading with these three Arctic isles, and I'll have to leave the rest to you. If we get away with it, Mac, we're both going to make a lot of

money. If the Japs take us red-handed we are going to smell hell and bite brimstone."

Not long after that conversation, Mac having taken aboard everything that he required and all supplies that he needed that were obtainable on the island, pushed the nose of the *Bonny Jean* out into mid-ocean with her bows pointing towards the forbidden sealing grounds. He left the *Dirty Jane* to continue her trading with the natives of the third island, and he knew that the skipper of that old tin kettle would go squattering on his pettifogging trading excursions and so fill in the time until McGlusky could return packed with poached seal skins. Talking of the *Dirty Jane* and her captain to his two officers, McGlusky remarked:

"Old Jo is a spunky old deil, there's no question about that, and he'll stand up to his contract with us to the very last atom that is in him."

"Old Skipper Jo wants to get even with the Japs for that lost leg and lost eye of his, to say nothing of the fingers of one hand," grinned the second officer.

"Don't care," growled McGlusky, "what the old chap's motives are. He'll see the game through with us and if it only comes off, as somehow or another I think it will, then the old man will make that packet of dollars he has been longing and praying for all his long life time. I never knew a better tryer than he of all the men I have known, and I seldom met a man who worked for a lifetime with such hard luck as he has had to fight against."

"Good luck to the old sea dog," rumbled the first officer, "and a bit of the same commodity for us. We're going to need it, Skipper—we're going to need it as sure as sugar suits a sweet tooth."

As soon as they were clear of the island McGlusky sent his sharpest-eyed man to the mast-head with orders to sweep the seas with his glasses and to report immediately any sail that he might chance to catch sight of,

or the smoke of any steamer. Ever since they had begun this voyage of adventure the weather had been abnormally favourable to them, and that good luck held. As they pushed towards the main coast where the ice packs had lain for centuries piled up in all their majesty, the weather became colder and colder until the men aboard the *Bonny Jean* were glad of any excuse to keep on the move. Strangely enough Ching How, the Chinese boy who had not been born in a cold climate, suffered from the change of weather least of all aboard the *Bonny Jean*, and he wore less warm clothing than any member of the crew, and when Baldy Jinks twitted him on this fact, Ching How had replied in his quaint pidgin dialect, which he almost invariably used when talking to the crew, though when talking to McGlusky he used his college English:

"You no cover your face up, Baldy."

"No, my face don't need covering up."

"Well," replied Ching How, with his eternal good-humoured grin, "me face top side, back side, face all over, no feel the cold."

On the other hand, Moonshine, the African negro, who had been born and bred of slave stock in the United States of America, felt the icy winds very keenly and stuck as close to his cook's galley as he possibly could, and one of the crew swore on his Bible oath that he had seen Moonshine absolutely cuddling the cook-stove. McGlusky, raised in Australia and in one of the hottest parts of that sunny climate, walked with his great chest almost bared to the stinging blasts, and the colder it got the more he seemed to relish it, and when twitted by his officers on his almost inhuman endurance, he remarked cheerfully:

"Well, I expect I am a throwback to one of my Scottish Highland forbears. Men o' my breed ye ken marched through the Lochaber snows thigh deep, with the wild winter winds tearing the pine trees from their

rocky fastnesses, in the old days when Scotland was at war with England, and I'm thinking that it's their blood I've inherited, for even when I was gold fossicking in the Klondike I could do with fewer clothing than any man I ever worked with."

As they drew nearer and nearer to the mainland where McGlusky intended to raid the seal preserves of Japan, the skipper turned on a whole watch of his men to keep their eyes skinned for the slightest sign of anything in the shape of a roving craft. The place he had selected from information that he had received, and had paid heavily for, when in San Francisco, appeared to be a sort of out-jutting elbow of the mainland, which was, according to his information, a favourite spot for seals of the biggest and best kinds, seals that for thousands of generations had come to that identical spot to breed and to disport themselves. The main reason why Mac had selected this particular position to commence his operations was that the waters adjacent were turbulent to a wonderful degree, and the currents and cross-currents that operated there made the ocean in that part seem like a boiling cauldron, and Mac had learnt especially from Baldy that the patrols of the Japanese fought shy of those waters because of the number of reefs that were known to exist there, for even the patrols fought shy of those hidden perils. Mac realized to the full his danger, and he argued to his officers when they debated the matter:

"There wouldn't be one chance in a thousand of getting away with a poaching expedition if the waters were ordinarily smooth and navigable, because the patrols would be eternally in the neighbourhood. As it is," he had argued, "the patrols look after the portions of the coast where the water is fairly safe, knowing that the majority of poachers would seek smooth water in which to operate. That being the case," he continued, "it's the rough water and the big chance for me;

it's the sort of gamble that has always appealed to my instincts."

When they drew close to the rendezvous they had selected, a half gale was blowing from off shore and that, added to the natural cussedness of the cross-currents, piled the waters up in foam-capped billows and made the bos'n exclaim as he stood watching beside McGlusky:

"Say, Skipper, that boiling water right ahead of us is just about as pretty a little stretch o' a mixture of hell and an ocean earthquake as any sailor man would wish to run into. I'm only hoping," he continued, "that we won't have the bad luck to bump into a sunken reef. If we do we are all going to Kingdom Come with our boots on."

"Suah, bos'n, that is a lily white lie yo're telling," interpolated Moonshine, the nigger cook.

"Is it, you coal black cinder? Why is it a lie?" came the rather rough reply from the lips of the bos'n.

"Because, sar, youse ain't wearing any boots, neither is any of de crew, youse nearly all of you bare-footed in spite of the cold."

The bos'n shrugged his shoulders good naturedly and replied:

"Well, old coal scuttle, I guess the reason for that is that when sailor men look on bad water they like to get ready for any little bit of swimming they may have to do, and no man can swim far with his sea boots on."

"I guess, sar," chuckled the nigger, "if I gets into dat bubbling, hissing, squalling water, I ain't going to swim very far, boots or no boots."

The man with the lead, hanging over the bows, kept bawling at the top of his voice the depth of the water in front of him. At all events he announced such a great depth of water that there was no fear of the *Bonny Jean* running aground, the only terror was sunken reefs, which were reported to be plentiful in that howling,

hissing cauldron. The leadsman proved, as the *Bonny Jean* moved forward, that the water was deep enough to float the biggest battleship that ever ploughed the waves, but the whirling uplift, and downfall of the waves, which made it appear as though the *Bonny Jean* was breasting a maelstrom, caused the stout craft to shiver as though a monster of the deep had seized her in its jaws by the bows and was shaking her in its rage. As they rode onwards the man at the peak yelled information that the ice ashore was smothered by a perfect forest of seals that lay about either in courting pairs or were frolicking amongst themselves after the manner of their kind.

"Shin up one of you lads about half-way to the truck and get from the look-out man about how many seals he thinks he can see. Mind you get his number right. We can't hear quite plainly everything he says from the mast-head in this welter of waters."

There was quite a tussle between the hands on deck to see who could be the first to shin up half-way to the main peak. The first man there yelled out the query to the look-out man that McGlusky had given him, and the answer that came brought a grim smile to the lips of the skipper, in spite of the terrible anxiety that the maelstrom of waters was causing him, for the reply was:

"Tell the skipper that if there isn't near a million seals in sight he can call me a blue-nosed liar."

When McGlusky got that reply the nigger Moonshine shouted:

"Hi! You up at de mast-head, yo're a blue-nosed liar all right, de ain't de number o' seals in dis darned ole Arctic."

Smiling genially, McGlusky flung this reply to the nigger:

"The man at the mast-head may be a blue-nosed liar but you're a black-nosed one for sure. There's many

million seals in this part of the world, and by the whiskers of Solomon we are going to get our share of them, old son. Now, all hands," he roared, "stand by and lower anchors fore and aft and see to it that they get good grippage or we'll be crowded ashore, and if that happens we wouldn't have the chance of a lost dollar in a Jewish ghetto of ever getting out again."

Every man was on his toes, their great adventure had begun in earnest, and they could now visualize the dollars that would come to them from their hazardous enterprise. The anchors were run out and were soon holding in firm bottom, and the boats that were to carry the seal hunters were rapidly swung over the sides. Even before the boats were swung out, McGlusky sent a hawk-eyed man to the mast-head to sweep the seas with his glasses for the first sign of any hostile ship.

"Two hours aloft, my lad, and then I'll change you, for I know by past experience how drowsy the cold makes a man who has no chance to exercise his limbs and keep his blood in motion," he said, and that became the rule of the men on watch, two hours aloft and two hours' work on deck or ashore. There was one good thing in their favour which arose from the turmoil of boiling waters in which the *Bonny Jean* lay. This fierce tumbling and chop of the waves caused a thick mist almost as dense as a fog to rise up and so obscure the sight of their ship from any vessel that might come prowling any little distance away at sea, and for this McGlusky was devoutly thankful.

"Everything is mixed with mercy," he chuckled to the man at the wheel, for McGlusky, with his eternal watchfulness had ordered the steersmen to do whatever work they had to do aboard ship whilst standing close to the wheel, so that he might be on the spot if the vessel had to put to sea in an emergency. Every little thing that McGlusky could think of to obviate peril he did,

and for this the men, being in the main a brainy lot of fellows, were thankful, because they knew that he never hit the bottle when at sea, and they sensed that everything that could be done for their safety was being done, and they were not likely to think him a molly-coddle for taking such care of the ship.

No sooner had the boats touched the waters than the men in them, seizing their oars, set to work to battle with the tumultuous waves that showed not the slightest signs of abating their boiling violence. But every man in those boats was as hard as granite and as skilful as a lifetime of practice could make any man, and they tackled their task with the grim resolution that was part of the heritage of the blue-water sailors of the world. It was a fierce savage struggle ere they ran up to the ice-bound shore that ran down below the level of the sea water, and when at last they did manage to beach their boats they all realized that they had had a foretaste of the work that lay in front of them. The two young officers with the boats proved very rapidly that they were worthy of the trust that McGlusky had placed in them. They were all eyes and ears and the way they hazed and drove the men proved that they knew that a hard day's work lay in front of them all, and they saw to it that no man went to sleep on his feet that day.

Each man had come armed with belt, knife, pistols, and cutlass. These weapons were carried in case of a surprise attack being sprung upon them from the hummocks that rose on the shoreward side. McGlusky had no knowledge at that period of the country that he was attempting to raid. There might or there might not be somewhere within attacking distance villages of natives, and if that proved to be the case he knew perfectly well amongst the natives there would be a large percentage of Japanese, and that these natives, led by the Japanese, would attack the boats' crew he very shrewdly opined.

For the seal killing each sailor was armed with a handy but heavy club made of hard wood. These clubs had been especially made at McGluskys own order in San Francisco. The method was to club the ill-fated creatures that lay about them on the ice in their hundreds. Each hunter stepped up briskly to the seal that he had selected, and then struck it with all the force of his powerful arms, on the top of the skull. One such powerfully aimed and delivered blow would more than do the job for the toughest of the seals. The poor creatures had not sense enough to realize that these two-legged animals that were advancing upon them were a menace to their lives.

As the men approached the seals the ungainly creatures, lying asleep, raised their big heads and gazed out of ox-like eyes filled with stupid wonder at these new creatures that had sprung upon them from the sea, and as the sailors, having no cause for fear, could advance as quickly as the slippery nature of the ice permitted, the seals commenced to amble towards the sea, using their flippers as means of propulsion, and a clumsier or more ungainly set of motions than those they employed in their attempts to escape it would have been hard for any man to have imagined.

There were other groups where the younger seals were frolicking amongst themselves, flirting or disporting themselves in their own uncouth way, and they took absolutely no notice of the sailors until the latter were amongst them, and then soon were heard the terrific strokes of the falling clubs, and each time a club fell a well-grown seal made a few spasmodic motions with its flippers, turned over on its side and lay as only lifeless things can lie. The work of killing went on with the fierce ruthlessness that becomes part of the seal hunter's nature. Now and again an exceptionally large and well-grown male seal would manage to get away from the foolish mob and go floundering and plunging seawards,

but the experienced men amongst the crew knowing these animals to be the prime prizes amongst the seal herds were quick to notice them, and then they invariably started in pursuit, and it was rare indeed that one of these seals managed to reach the water's edge and plunge into safety. There was no semblance of sport about this hunting, it was butchery pure and simple, and every man did as much of the killing as he could possibly manage to do.

Those of them who had been seal hunting before realized at a glance that this vast pack of seals that McGlusky had lighted upon were of remarkable size and in wonderful condition, and they were eager that not a solitary pelt should escape them that they could possibly get. They did not stop to skin any beast they killed, their main objective was to keep between the water and the seal herds that had been basking a good way inland from the ocean, and even whilst they were busily killing those that were nearest to the water's edge those seals which were furthestmost back were so insanely stupid that they did not seem to notice, or if they noticed they did not seem to understand what was going on amongst their relatives and friends. This fact was sure evidence to the experienced hunters that no seal hunters had been in that locality before, or at any rate not for a number of years. There was not a man amongst the hunters who did not wish in the heart and soul of him that the creatures they had to slay for profit had not more of the fighter's spirit, and would have put up a battle of sorts for their lives.

"Talk about killing sheep," growled Baldy Jinks to a group of his shipmates who were busy clubbing near him, "this game o' seal hunting is worse than sheep killing."

"Sheep," grumbled another sailor, "why, matey, sheep are tough compared to a blooming seal. They haven't any sense in regard to getting away and they

haven't a spunk of venom in their natures to put up any sort of a fight."

The seals at the far end of the indent seemed at length to gather some idea that these two-legged up-standing marauders, who swung their terrible clubs so swiftly and so fiercely at them, were a menace to them, and they began to make something like a concerted rush downwards to the sea, but a great number of them were clubbed and would never touch salt water again. This went on until the whole of the indent was cleared of living animals and nothing remained but the carcasses strewn near and far ready for skinning. Then the officers gave orders to the men, who by this time were not nearly so fresh as they had been when they came ashore, but the officers drove them and drove them mercilessly:

"Out with your skinning knives and strip every beast that lies here before there is time to get a touch of the frost into them," and the men set to work with a will, for they knew that if the frost got thoroughly hold of any carcass before they had time to work their will upon it with their knives it was good-bye to that pelt. Fortunately the weather though certainly cold was not really frosty, and the pelts came away with an amount of speed that was something to wonder at, and the sweat came pouring from the faces and the bodies of the hunters in rivulets long before McGlusky gave the signal for the boats to return to the *Bonny Jean*. Then the men dropped their oars to carry every pelt to the boats, and set off at a scrambling, slipping, tumbling, falling run, for the tongues of the officers lashed them like flails if they showed any signs of slackness.

"You're out to get big money, durn you," roared the second officer, "get in and earn it," and earn it the men did, for many a fierce backache and many a pair of trembling legs were found amongst the boats' crew,

strong, hard and tough though the men were, and when the boats were loaded the men had to get in, and were steered by the second officer, who led the way with his boat's crew out into the midst of the terrible wilderness of waters, which seemed to be tossing about more fiercely than when they had pulled through it going shorewards. Then came the work of unloading the boat and bringing the pelts aboard, and no sooner were they all unloaded than the party that had been ashore were ordered to fall to on their grub which the nigger Moonshine and Ching How had been preparing for them, and whilst they were engaged in bolting their food, and bolt it they had to, for the officers roared at them even whilst they were at their meal, and the catch word of the hour was: "Up and hurry, you sons o' dogs."

Whilst these men were feeding, the rest of the men aboard the *Bonny Jean* were at work salting down the pelts and packing them away under the supervision of the energetic bos'n, who, on his short legs, seemed to be absolutely tireless. For his part McGluskys was everywhere, sorting, commanding, giving advice and getting the work out of every man to the utmost of his capacity. There was one big fellow amongst the crew who had told prodigious stories during the voyage concerning his feats of personal endurance and strength, but, like most big men, he had found the work of sliding about on the ice, and stooping again and again to skin, played havoc with his boasted strength, and he was the first to raise a growl whilst at his food, saying:

"Say, men, this game of seal huntin' ain't all it's cracked up to be; it's the toughest job I've ever tackled."

A chorus of jeers and remarks than were more pithy than polite greeted this statement from the lips of the shorter and more compactly built men, who could stay any kind of task better than could the giants. As soon as the men had bolted their food and washed it down with mugs of red-hot coffee, which was strong enough

to stand up in the cups by itself, McGlusky gave the order:

"Peace now, men, have your smoke and then buckle down to it, and come and start in on the salting whilst your mates take your place ashore and get on with the killing and skinning."

One of the men cocking his eye ashore, replied to McGlusky, saying:

"Sir, there ain't anything more to hunt. We've got every seal that was on that indent."

"Maybe you have," retorted McGlusky, "but away to the right and to the left of that open space which you call the indent, there are hundreds and thousands of hummocks of snow and ice, and in between those hummocks we will find hundreds of seals, and I want every one of them. So have your smoke, men, and you fellows who have been ashore come and get on with the salting whilst the rest of the men take your place, and I'll give you twenty minutes for smoking, not a second over."

When the smoke time was over, the men who had to go ashore took to the boats, and the fierce fight with the storm-tossed waters was repeated, only this time it was far worse than it had been on the first occasion, for the men not only had to pull the distance to the shore, but they had to row up the coast for a considerable distance so as to discover a new place where the seals had not been disturbed. Whilst the men in the boats were pulling towards an advantageous landing place in search of new grounds where seals might be lurking, the man at the mast-head had not been idle. He was one of the best and most reliable hands in the whole crew and knew his job, and he kept his glasses flashing in all directions, searching the open waters for any sign of a Jap patrol. Being placed so high above the ocean's bed the look-out man was above the dense fog that rose from the waters that covered the body of the *Bonny*

Jean from the eyes of any patrol boat that might pass within eyesight distance of her.

The look-out man had just fixed a fresh plug of tobacco in his cheek when his eagle eyes caught sight of a vessel scudding at the full of her speed out in the open sea, and that she was in desperate need of speed the look-out man rapidly realized, as he saw she had crowded on every scrap of sail that could be tacked on to her.

"She's on the run, by thunder," growled the watchdog at the mast-head.

Having arrived at this conclusion he turned his glasses in the wake of the fugitive and saw the reason for her speed. A vessel was evidently in full pursuit of her, and was crowding after her, carrying every stitch of canvas that her masts could carry. In a moment the watchdog up aloft raised his voice in a fierce bawl and yelled for the skipper, McGluskys. He was a wise fellow that watchdog, he did not trouble to shout his information. He knew by long experience that as soon as there was anything of importance to be done McGluskys always attended to it himself with speed and precision, and it was so on this occasion, for as soon as the hail from the mast-head reached the deck McGluskys, with three rapid bounds, left the spot where he had been watching the efforts of the boats to fight their way through the maelstrom, and like a big gorilla he tore his way up aloft. There were plenty of men aboard the *Bonny Jean* who considered themselves speed merchants when it came to climbing the rigging at critical moments, but the fastest man aboard would have admitted that he was a veritable slowcoach compared with McGluskys, who possessed not only gigantic strength but a suppleness of limb which was unbeatable when it came to a race against time to reach the mast-head. The watchdog aloft did not waste time in words; he simply thrust the glass into the skipper's

hands and pointed to the scudding fugitive, and then instantly he directed McGlusky's attention to the pursuing craft that was gaining on the fugitive at a terrific pace. One glance told the whole story to Mac's practised eyes. Swinging his face round he spoke sharply to his look-out man, saying:

"Get down below and shake your shanks about doing it, and tell the bos'n to see that no light is showing from the cook's galley or any other part of the *Bonny Jean* and tell every man aboard that no pipes are to be lit, a sudden flash of light might show through even this fog, and if it does we are going right into the thick of trouble."

As the man began to shin down, McGlusky added:

"Tell the men not to shout loud enough to be heard one yard from one another, sounds have an uncanny knack of carrying through fogs and we don't want to cause the slightest suspicion to the Jap patrol that is in pursuit of that free trader—poor devil!"

That the pursued craft was what Mac termed a "free trader," meaning thereby a poacher, the skipper had not a shadow of doubt. There are certain movements which never fail to send messages to the eyes of experienced sailor men, and all the actions of the pursued craft bespoke a guilty conscience in the body of the skipper aboard her. Whilst Mac watched the flight and pursuit he noticed that the fugitive had determined upon a desperate course, for he had tacked in such a manner that it was a million to one that she would run herself ashore if she kept that line of progress for any length of time. As McGlusky watched the new movement of the fugitive he growled:

"That runaway is wanted for something almighty bad or she wouldn't take the desperate line she is now taking."

Later on he discovered that his surmise was a correct one, for the *Saint Angela*, which was the runaway's name,

was wanted by the Jap patrol for having fired on Japanese boats that had been sent to cut her off, and in the firing half a dozen Japanese sailors had been either badly mauled or killed outright. This news was to come to McGluskly later on. Still his surmise at the moment was proof of the soundness of his judgment, a judgment that was verified a few seconds later when a puff of bluish white smoke broke out from the forward part of the pursuing patrol, and a second or so later the boom of a gun reverberated over the Arctic seas. Mac had had plenty of experience in his nomadic life concerning guns and their uses, and as soon as he heard the boom his eyes were glued through his glasses on the rigging of the fugitive, and he had scarcely focused his glasses ere he saw the havoc that the shell had made. There was a tangle of broken spars and torn and twisted sails aloft where only a moment or two before nothing but beauty and usefulness had been in evidence.

"Thundering good gunnery, by the Lord that made me," growled Mac, "and whatever else they may have aboard that Jap patrol they have a good gunner, and one that won't stick at half measures."

Ten seconds later a cloud of grey smoke leapt from the stern of the pursued craft, and this was followed by a streak of fire and the boom of a gun. Flashing his glasses round upon the Jap patrol Mac saw where the shell from the fugitive's gun hit the water and ricocheted away.

"Bad luck, old party," grunted Mac, whose sympathies were all with the fleeing ship and crew. "I'd lend you a hand with every man and gun I've got, only I'm both anchored and land locked, and your business will be finished before I could get my barque into action."

The best part of the *Bonny Jean's* crew were now in the rigging trying to watch the stern happenings they knew were taking place. Their ears told them what

their eyes could not see, and every throb—boom—throb of the guns told the *Bonny Jean's* crew a story that did not need any interpreting, and their curses were hot enough to have dispersed the fog, or burnt a blanket.

CHAPTER IX

A SEAL POACHER'S FATE

Now that the rigging of the poacher was shot into a tangled mass, the Jap patrol was able to get the weather gauge of her, and she managed so that all her guns were soon playing havoc with the poacher, but the men aboard the outlaw of the sea were both game and desperate, and they fought back with the courage of despair. The flag they had hoisted and were fighting under, the flag of Australia, was shot away, and instantly one of the crew seized the torn and ragged remnant, and with it in his teeth he clambered aloft and nailed the rag to the mast as a signal of defiance to the bitter end. The Australian crew knew that each man aboard the doomed ship was fighting with a rope round his neck, they having fired on a warship's boat's crew on the high seas when an attempt had been made to board them for inspection purposes. But although they may have been malefactors according to the code, there was not a man possessing a yellow streak amongst them. They knew that the brown men would not sink their ship if it could possibly be avoided, because she was laden to the gunwales with glorious furs—furs worth a small fortune. They saw through the brown men's game, and knew that the Japs wanted to strike terror into their hearts with gun fire, and force a surrender, and McGlusky, watching with all his eyes, wondered what the desperate band of men would do. He had not long to wait in suspense—down came the

poacher's mainmast, a crashing mass of splinters—a tribute to the brown men's masterly gunnery.

"It's all over with them now, Skipper," yelled Baldy in Mac's ear, "they haven't the chance of a rat in a dog's mouth, they'll have to surrender"; and Mac's face grew grey with wrath as he listened to his sailor's bitter remark. A moment later he snarled through gritted teeth:

"I wouldn't surrender, I'd scuttle my ship before I'd pull that bit o' bunting down that's nailed to the mast. I'd go down with my ship and take my cargo with me—that's the Australian way as I know it."

Baldy, nearly crazed with excitement, yelled:

"Look, Skipper, look, the poachers are taking to their boats, and by the god of the deep blue sea they have scuttled their ship; she is going down under their feet. The brown men won't get their spoil after all, Skipper."

"No," cursed Mac. "No, but they'll get the ship's officers and crew"—and they did.

An hour later, McGlusky, peering from the top of his mainmast, saw the Jap patrol making off at a good round pace.

"It's your turn to-day, you brown blighters," he growled as he watched the patrol carving its way through the tumbling seas, "it's your turn to-day, but to-morrow is another day, and to-morrow will surely dawn and turn the pages of history to a different tune than that which has been played to-day."

His face looked very grim and harsh as he clambered from his perch aloft to the deck of the *Bonny Jean* and began giving orders.

"Take the spare boat," he cried to the bos'n, "and as many men as you need and go ashore and find out what our men are doing amongst the seals. Tell them that no man must raise his voice in a shout no matter what happens, because voices carry the devil's own distance

in these lonely waters, and though I do not think it likely, that Jap patrol may make her way in this direction, especially if the brown spies have even a smell of a suspicion that the *Bonny Jean* is operating hereabouts."

When the bos'n's boat returned they brought with them the glad news that seals had been found amongst the hummocks in even greater quantities than they had been discovered on the indent, and he reported that the killing and the skinning was going on at full speed. As the men ashore had heard the gun fire out at sea, they guessed pretty accurately what was happening, though the mist that rolled all along the coast hid the sight of the unequal duel from their eyes, and by the same token hid those that were ashore from the eyes of anyone on the deck of the brown patrol. When they came off the land with the pelts crowded one on top of the other till the boats were in danger of being swamped, Mac set the men to work and he harried them fiercely. The sight of the fight that had taken place that day had roused the wicked devil which slumbered in McGlusky's being very close to the surface, and he was no longer the genial, chaffing, light-hearted skipper. His face had grown grey and his mouth was set like steel, and the way he hazed his men gave them a fair insight into the real nature of their skipper.

Not only did he force the men to work double tides but he threw himself headlong into the labour of sorting and packing away the trophies of the chase. For fifteen days McGlusky kept the *Bonny Jean* hanging about on the coast-line that was known to all navigators as the "tumbled waters." They searched out every inch of the adjacent coast and got a glorious cargo of pelts, and then, Mac, waiting for a favourable wind off the land, swung the *Bonny Jean* round and made away with his prize. He knew fairly well where he would find old Jo, the skipper of the *Dirty Jane*, and he made a bee line for

that spot, and all the days the men were straining their eyes on the look-out for the brown enemy that might spring upon them like a wolf of the waters. As they travelled, the men kept a keen eye alert in all directions without being commanded to do so; as for Mac, he scarcely seemed to sleep a wink, unless he did his sleeping as he prowled the deck. At one juncture he called his officers around him, and by the same token he included the sturdy bos'n in their ranks, and when he had their full attention, he said:

"I want to tell you in plain language my intentions if we are overhauled. I'm not going to make it a fool-hardy long-range shooting match with the guns; the Japs have us beaten at that game. Their gunners are bound to be top-notch men; I saw that for myself when I watched their work against the Australian trader off the mainland. I'll play 'possum with them and match Australian shrewdness against Japanese cunning. I'll signal a protest at their high-handed conduct in commanding me to shorten sail; we'll just take in enough of our canvas to make the *Bonny Jean* glide gently towards the Japs, and we must take mighty good care that there is not a weapon showing aboard our craft, not even a rifle must be visible from the Jap's look-out point at their mast-head. We must do everything to lead them to suppose that we are lambs willing enough to throw up our hands when we are called upon to do so, but as soon as we are within pistol range I'll give the order, and every man aboard will hear that command for I'll send it out at the top of my lungs, and then each fellow will leap to the bulwarks and snatch up his rifle, and get to work on the Japs, sweeping their decks with rifle fire as I trained you to do when we were making our way hitherwards from Honolulu."

Having faced directly towards the men whom he had selected to manipulate the guns, Mac said:

"We'll cover up the guns with tarpaulins, and litter

the decks in slovenly fashion as though we were just some dirty tramp under half-drunken officers, but when you hear my yell, rip those tarpaulins off the guns and don't wait for orders, but mark down the most vital spot that you can cover at the moment of action and let go like blazes. We'll pour in rifle volley after rifle volley and I'll be at the wheel, and I'll get the *Bonny Jean* up alongside the Jap, and we'll grapple her and board her, and we'll show the brown men what a mixture of Australian and American seamen are like when it comes to a battle with the steel. We'll fling ourselves over their rail on to the decks and in amongst them, and then, by the god of my fathers if you'll follow Jamie McGlusky, he will either lead you to hell or to victory, for surrender we won't. You all know that I have fixed a barrel of gunpowder so that it can be exploded in the hold with the fire of a pistol, and if the worst comes to the worst, we'll blow the *Bonny Jean* to blazes, and with our grappling hooks we'll cling to the Jap and drag her down with us."

Only one voice was raised in comment at this speech, and that voice was the bos'n's, who said:

"By the Jumping Susan, Skipper, if there's a man aboard the *Bonny Jean* who ain't with you 'cart and 'ands, 'e'd better 'op over the side and swim for it; 'e'll dance the devil's 'ornpipe on board if 'e don't. This 'ere ship ain't going to be an 'ome from 'ome for any cur that is willin' to cry quit to the brown blighters without making a fight to a finish for the spoil."

There was not a waster amongst the whole of that crew of Mac's; not only were they dead game but what is more they were hearty over the matter and in good spirits, and if things had only been a little more even in regard to numbers and armament, no one in the whole of the world of waters would have been more willing to have a hand to hand tussle with the Mikado's men, of the sea patrol. They were the real stuff of

which the American Navy is made up, and just how good that navy is the world at large does not know, and cannot hazard a guess, but that they are better than any Asiatic breed ever knew how to be the world can be content to learn from this chronicle, *for the man who writes it knows.*

If the white members of the crew were full of good heart, Ching How, the Chinese boy, and Moonshine, the nigger cook, were fairly oozing good spirits from every pore in their bodies, for both the yellow and the black were fighters, though nowhere on the planet could there have been found two men who looked more unlike one another. The yellow boy was slim-figured, small of bone and slender of limb, whilst his expression was about as docile, speaking generally, as that of a cat lying by a cream jug, whilst the nigger, Moonshine, was burly of figure, round of face and head, and had the African negro type of feature, and he was about as strong as a bear. This strangely assorted couple, the one highly educated and bred from aristocratic stock, the other the offshoot of a race of wild warriors, with just a little veneer of so-called civilization in his make up, but in one respect they were both tremendously alike. Each of them stood ready to fight at the drop of a hat for McGlusky, and any cause that McGlusky stood for, and neither of them would have troubled overmuch to ask if McGlusky's cause was a right one or a wrong one, it was sufficient for those two pagans, as Baldy Jinks termed them, to know that the cause was the cause of McGlusky, the Australian son of adventure, whose magnetic personality bound men to him in bonds stronger than triple steel.

In due course the *Bonny Jean* nosed her way into the harbour of the central island, and all eyes aboard were searching every nook and cranny for a sight of the *Dirty Jane*, and a great sigh of disappointment went up from them all when they saw that though there

were three other vessels in the harbour, not one of them bore the faintest resemblance to the old rusty iron craft of Skipper Jo Starboard.

"Bust his buttons," grumbled the second mate after he had swiftly surveyed the harbour and found that the man whom they wanted was non-existent. McGlusky overheard this rather unfeeling remark and, half wheeling in his pacing of the deck, he snapped out:

"Never mind busting old Jo Starboard's buttons, Mr. Officer, the old man had no settled rendezvous with us here; I was to look for him when I was ready, and I'm not going to squeal because I did not find him at the first of three ports that I had to call at. The only thing to do is to make a pretence of trading for a day or two here, and then if in the meantime Captain Jo Starboard and the *Dirty Jane* have not hove into sight, why, we'll just take the rough with the smooth, and go on our way in search of him. If he has been here recently some of the native traders will surely drop that information to us if they are properly pumped, and the same applies to the fact if he has not been here, if it so happens that things lie that way."

As McGlusky moved across to have a glance at the water on the starboard side, Baldy Jinks, who had been standing near when Mac had brought the second mate up all standing with his verbal castigation, remarked to several of the crew who were lounging near:

"That's just like Skipper McGlusky to stand up for a man who isn't here to stand up for himself. By the long-tailed coat of Abraham Lincoln we are lucky to have such a skipper; he's not up on the roof on the first bit of success that comes his way, and he ain't down like a cat in a well if things are not running just the way he wants 'em to run, and whether his spirits are up aloft or down below, he isn't all the blooming time taking it out of his crew. He's the sort of feller I like, to tie up to, eh, mates?"

The hearty nods and grins of his hearers told old Baldy Jinks that McGlusky stood all right with his crew. So Baldy, as he started coiling ropes on the deck, lifted up his voice and sang:

* SONG

*"It's nice to sit aisy an' cosy
By the fire in the old arm-chair,
If the glass of hot grog
An' a rosy-faced lass
Are kapin' ye company there.*

*Och, it's nice to sit aisy an' cosy
Wid a colleen climbin' up on y'r knee,
Ye can laugh at the dark, dirty weather
That gave ye the divil at sea.*

Altogether boys:

*That gave ye the divil at sea,
That gave ye the divil at sea."*

McGlusky did not join in the singing with his crew, but he stood with a smile on his cast-iron visage that showed them all that he appreciated their good spirits. After taking stock of the situation, the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* decided to play 'possum for a while, so turning to his first and second officers, he said:

"I think I'll take a turn ashore and visit the few folks in good positions hereabouts and make friends. In the meantime make everything ready to careen the ship if necessary; there's a suitable place for such a job away at the north-east end of this little harbour, and," he added, with a wink to the mate, "it's my decided opinion that we ought to have had the bottom of the *Bonny Jean* carefully examined before we even left San

* This song is copyright by the author.

Francisco. The way she has been sailing lately gives me the impression that the sooner she has her bottom scraped and cleaned the better for us."

The mate let a little gurgling chuckle break from his throat ere he answered:

"I had noticed, Skipper, that the *Bonny Jean* was dragging in the water, but I didn't really realize that her bottom was as foul as to require careening, but it's so if you say so, sir."

"I don't mean," riposted McGlusky, "that we will do the necessary cleaning just at present; not at any rate until I have picked up the *Dirty Jan* and transferred our cargo, then we'll come back here, and it may fit in with my plans to have the careening performed, or it may not. Still, we must be ready for any eventuality, but in the meantime it is just as well that you should make an examination of the ground and let it be generally known that we are coming back here for the purpose I have mentioned."

"I think I get your tactics now, Skipper: you want to throw just a leetle bit of dust in the eyes of any of the Japanese agents who are located at this harbour."

"That is my intention," responded McGlusky, "and in the meantime I'll go amongst the few people who are resident here, and in a careless, off-hand kind of way, I will let it be known that after we have visited the nearby islands we shall come back here to have the *Bonny Jean* carefully overhauled."

As Mac was turning to attend to his duties, the mate threw out a suggestion that he thought might be useful:

"Do you remember, Skipper," he said, "when we were here last there was a Jap trader named Herosha, who was most pressing in his invitations to you to visit him in his home?"

"Yes, I remember the man," and with a broad grin

and a dig in the ribs with his thumb that made the first officer wince, Mac added: "and Mr. Mate, I remember that the trader Herosha had about the most devilishly lovely little daughter that my eyes ever rested upon."

"You were not the only man who noticed Herosha's daughter, Skipper, every man aboard the *Jean* sort of fell for her."

"Yes," grinned McGlusky, "I know you did, but we all had to stand, more than a little bit, on our best behaviour on account of the presence of Miss Judy Hiscox."

"Miss Judy Hiscox," responded the mate, "was what you would term a good shipmate, and did not put on frills like so many decent women think proper to wear. But all the same," he added, lowering one eyelid almost malignantly in Mac's direction, "all the same, Skipper, Miss Judy was a sort of drawback where women were concerned. She never said a word about it to any of us, not in my hearing anyhow, but she sort of let it be understood that whilst she was aboard ship there was to be no canoodling with any of the females that we might run into at any of the ports we visited."

"I didn't know that Miss Judy's influence had affected my officers and crew," answered Mac, "but I will admit that there was something in her manner that kept me, as her partner, and as the captain of the *Bonny Jean*, from looking for any er—er—longshore perquisites of the feminine description, but now Eve has no restraining influence on board. Upon my soul, I don't see why a sailor man should not go ashore and pick a few of the flowers that bloom in the gardens of delight, providing, of course, neither officer or man transgresses the laws of native hospitality. There are girls and girls amongst every kind of community, native, Jap or otherwise, and we don't want a bad name

for that kind of thing to attach itself to the *Bonny Jean*."

"I don't think from what I heard when I was here last, Skipper, that you need have any qualms concerning that lovely little piece of goods, trader Herosha's tiny little daughter."

Mac stood lolling easily against the nearby bulwark, and lounging thus, he said to his mate:

"It seems an ungodly piece of masculine brutality for great big men like you and I to be talking in such a way of the Little Brown Dove; that, I believe, is the poetic name of the trader's girl."

"That's her name, Skipper, but if she's a dove, then I am a nice little pink-eyed, woolly, white rabbit."

"Think so, eh?" remarked McGlusky.

"I don't think so, Skipper. I'm dashed well sure that that little image knows enough to set a town on fire, even in a snowstorm."

"When I first saw her ashore," grumbled Mac, "she struck me at first as just a mighty pretty little girl kid, because her head did not reach any higher than my belt, and I was astounded to learn that that mite of a thing was a woman. She was little in every way, tiny hands and tinier feet, but she had the most glorious jet-black hair that I ever saw on the head of a woman and her kimono and other truck in the dressing line was as fine as any I ever saw a brown girl wear, even in Tokio; you see, her father, the trader, is a fairly wealthy man and can afford luxuries for his only child."

"I noticed that," responded the mate, "her kimono was of the richest, and the most gorgeous pattern and material that money could procure. Everything that she wore, including her rings and bangles, were of the richest quality; she seems to be the apple of that Jappy man's eyes, though as a general rule, the Japs don't place much value upon their daughters—all their thoughts are centred on their sons."

"Well," answered McGlusky, "as Herosha hasn't got a son, he thinks the next best thing to spend his money on is his only daughter."

"By Jove," murmured the mate, almost ecstatically, "never in all my life have I looked into such a pair of eyes as that little mite of a woman had in her face."

"Yes, her eyes were lovely," answered the skipper, "but her mouth appealed to me more than her eyes; it was a mouth that looked as though a deep crease had been folded in a piece of crimson velvet, and behind it lay her teeth like pearls of price."

"I see," jeered the first officer, "if you didn't get to close quarters with the damsel on account of the presence of Miss Judy Hiscox, Skipper, you didn't waste any opportunities with regard to feeding an' feasting your eyes."

"Couldn't dashed well help looking at her. I've seen beauties of Japan many a time, but I've never seen one like Little Brown Dove amongst the brown people during the years I have known that nation. All that I could see of her limbs was a perfect model, both as regards to her arms and her under pinnings."

A little laugh broke from the mate, with whom McGlusky was on the very best of terms, and he said:

"Better ring off, Skipper, or you'll be telling the whole truth directly, and don't go any further into details. You've already touched upon the damsel's mouth and her eyes, her hands and her under pinnings. If you've any further comments to make you'd better join the catholic religion and make them to your father confessor."

"I have nothing further to confess," protested McGlusky, "and what is more, you dashed weel know I'm no woman's fool to go dotty because a wee beauty smiles on me."

"Well, Skipper, go ashore an' leave the ship to my care and have your fling, and make up for lost oppor-

tunities. Of course, I don't mean make a meal of things, but there's no harm in feeding your eyes on the beauty of such a dainty little piece of goods as Little Brown Dove," the mate added slyly.

"I'll do so," McGlusky flung back at his tormentor, then as he was spinning round on his heel to make his way over the side and into his boat, he half-whispered: "You can put all your notions in your pipe and smoke 'em, Mr. Mate; my chief objective in visiting the trader Herosha is to get into confab with his wonderful little daughter, but not for the purpose of an amorous interlude. I have a pretty shrewd idea that the trader only wanted me to visit him so that his daughter, the Little Brown Dove, might pump out of me something with regard to the purposes of the *Bonny Jean* in these waters. We are a big bit of a mystery to the Japs, I know that, and it would be just like them to use a girl like the Little Brown Dove to pump our secret out of some of us, or a little bit out of each of us."

"I never thought of that side of the matter, but by Jingo, now you mention it, I should think that you are not far from the truth in your guess. If I may be allowed to say so, Skipper, I'd be almighty careful how much *sake* that little doll got me to swallow whilst I was in her company; whisky and rum is bad enough, but that *sake* is the devil's own brew for loosening a man's tongue. I know," he continued with a rueful grimace, "because I let a Japanese girl lead me up the garden a good many years ago when I was trading in Yokohama, and though there are not many men—though I say it myself—who can beat me at carrying my liquor, I was completely baffled on that occasion, and gave away the secret of the enterprise that we had in view. I not only had a sore head the day after my battle of wits with the little Jap wench, but I had a bruise right in the middle of my pride that I haven't forgotten yet."

"I'll see to it," retorted McGlusky, "that neither the

girl, or her cute father, get any *sake* inside me. I am not altogether innocent with regard to the tricks played by the Japanese with their national drink. It's not how much *sake* you get inside you," he commented a moment later; "I've known a man get a loose tongue in his head and only swallow one small nip of *sake*. They are devilish clever in the matter of drugging liquor, those smooth-faced little brown folk. So I'll be on the look-out, and you see to it that no visitors from the land get a free leg to come aboard, and don't let visitors get any of the crew into the talkative stage."

That was Mac's last word as he swung a leg over the bulwarks and went down the ladder into his waiting boat. It was only a short distance to the tiny little jetty which accommodated the boats, and Mac was soon ashore, and as he had not lost his land legs in spite of the length of time he had been at sea, he was very soon very much at home. He did not go direct to the house of the trader Herosha, for he was not altogether a guileless person, this sailor man; he made, as a matter of fact, half a dozen calls before, seemingly quite by accident, he found himself in front of the place of business that was run by Herosha. The welcome he received when he presented himself was of the most effusive order, for though they are not, speaking generally, a demonstrative race, the Japs can nevertheless, on occasion, be as full of gestures as a Frenchman.

The trader Herosha himself was a little well-set-up man in the prime of life, and he looked an athlete, which, by the way, he was. As soon as McGlusky got into talk he made inquiries concerning certain goods that he required for the ship, and having given his order, he turned to the trader and began to chat with him familiarly. He had met the man upon his previous visit, and in the islands it is not the custom for men to stand on ceremony and wait for long acquaintance before becoming on fairly familiar terms the one with

the other. After some casual remarks had been passed on both sides, the trader invited the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* into an inner room, and no sooner was Mac ensconced comfortably in an European arm-chair that was bulky enough even for his leonine proportions, than an inner door opened and the daughter of the house appeared carrying a tray, on which was placed several tiny little glasses and a bottle of *sake*.

It was not the custom of the country, not amongst the Japanese, at any rate, for the man of the house to introduce his daughter to male visitors, or to men of any kind for that matter. They seemed always to allow acquaintanceship to be a matter of mutual drift, and Little Brown Dove was not in the least wee bit coy, and she was soon chatting and laughing with this big, bronze, brawny man of the wild, rolling ocean, and when McGlusky, with all the politeness of some ancient Scottish chieftain, declined the *sake* on the grounds that a slight attack of indigestion made him, for the time being, fight shy of all spirituous liquor, Little Brown Dove met his objections with a merry little rippling laugh that sounded for all the world like melody made by silver joy bells, and, taking up her empty tray, she moved away on feet that did not shuffle on the floor in straw sandals, as ninety per cent of the Japanese women move, because she wore a pair of pretty pink slippers with heels that were intended to add something to her tiny height. She was out of the room so short a space of time that McGlusky might have been forgiven if he had imagined that this little amateur waitress had had a foreboding that the big sailor would refuse the first drink she brought in.

When she re-appeared she brought with her a bottle of American beer on the tray, and one shrewd glance on McGlusky's part told him that neither the cork nor the label on the bottle had been tampered with, but to make assurance doubly sure, McGlusky, in his

politest manner, refused to allow the little wizard woman to stain her hands by drawing the cork for him, and he at once proceeded to perform that duty for himself, and the wholehearted tug that he had to give to the cork told him that the bottle had not been meddled with. All the waiting was done by the Little Brown Dove, who seemed to enjoy having the opportunity to air her English, which was so remarkably good that McGlusky shrewdly suspected that she had been educated at one of the American mission schools in Japan. The skipper drank very abstemiously during that visit, but he made up by the furnace-like way in which he smoked, and as his host and hostess had provided some excellent cigars, of which Mac was a connoisseur, the big fellow was soon enjoying himself, and not the least part of his enjoyment came from his conversation with the Little Brown Dove, who, in a merry kind of fashion, proved herself to be quite a witty conversationalist, a trait in her character that was such an unusual one for a Japanese damsel that Mac was not a little bit surprised. As time went on the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* tumbled across another fact which surprised him not a little, for when he happened to mention something casually concerning the City of San Francisco that guards the golden gate to the Pacific, Little Brown Dove at once exclaimed:

"Oh, but me, I know Frisco, that citee well."

"Do you, by Jove?" riposted Mac, really startled by this information, for he knew that though quite a number of low-class Japanese girls spent a short spell of time in the American city, it was news to him that a girl of the daughter of Herosha's class should have been a resident in the City of the Golden Gate.

"What were you doing there?" he queried after a spell of silent thought. A bright smile parted the exquisite lips of the Japanese damsel and brought into view two rows of teeth that would have shamed

the finest pearls that ever came from the ocean's depths.

"What did you do in Frisco?" Mac repeated.

"Me? I go to the school there, what you call convent school, at the top end of Kearney Street. You know that street, eh, Captain McGluske-e, it is the one that has the big cigar store on the end that faces the sea?"

"Oh, yes," came Mac's slowly drawled answer, "I know that cigar store mighty well; it was there that I met a friend of mine, a brother of the great boxing man, Jim Corbett, but I don't suppose that you would know anything of such a matter, eh, Miss Herosha?"

Instantly a decided pout altered the shape of the crimson lips of the Japanese demoiselle, and the semblance of a frown brought her magnificent brows together, and her tiny, almost baby face, looked like a mimic thunderstorm.

"What has offended you?" queried Mac, smiling broadly at the signs of disapproval that the damsel was showing.

"I no like be called 'Miss Herosha.' My name it ees Little Brown Dove."

"I don't wonder," agreed McGlusky wholeheartedly, "that you prefer the name that your own people have given you; it sounds a million times sweeter and prettier than the American name 'Miss,' and if I may be permitted to do so, I shall call you Little Brown Dove for the future."

Instantly, as though a magic wand had been swept across her face, the frown was wiped out, and the rather sulky droop of the eyelids fled from the little waxen beauty's countenance, and her eyes were sparkling and her lips smiling, and she was opening all her batteries of coquetry upon the stalwart sailor, who, if the truth must be told, thrilled to the marrow of his bones under the attack made upon him with such un-

blushing sweetness and swiftness. After a time, Herosha, the trader, excused himself, saying:

"I have much business with Sumamar, he is a packer who lives a few miles away, and I would like to attend to it if the captain will excuse me." And as McGlusky, taking this as a hint that he had outworn his welcome, made a move to rise from his chair, the trader promptly clapping a hand upon his shoulder, bade him stay, saying:

"You sailor men have so little opportunity to amuse yourselves that you would be foolish to deny yourself when you have a chance, so do stop, captain, and talk with the Little Brown Dove, and she will play for you and sing for you and dance the Japanese dances for you, and the time will fly on wings."

As Little Brown Dove not only supplemented her parent's very friendly invitation expressed verbally, but coming to the side of McGlusky's chair, she put one of her doll-like looking little hands that looked as though they were carved out of spotless ivory, on one of his mighty shoulders, and made a pretence of forcing him down, though as McGlusky confessed later on if a butterfly winging its way through the room had landed upon his shoulder it would have made as much impression as far as weight or strength was concerned. This dainty, pretty little action on the part of Little Brown Dove was supplemented a moment or two later by a rich laugh which rippled from her lips like the tinkling of waters of a silver stream in the sunlight.

"You will stay with me, Captain McGluske-e?" she murmured, giving the peculiar drawl to the end of his name which made it so bewitching coming from lips so enticing. "Me," she added, "I am not a singer like some you will hear in Tokio, but I can sing the songs of Japan for you, songs of love, songs of the flowers and the birds, and the cherry and peach and pear trees all abloom in the sunlight, and perhaps I can sing some

little nigger songs that I learned in Frisco, not verree well, but I make the noise they sing better than most Japanese girls can."

"I am sure you can," muttered McGlusky, who had resumed his seat, and loosened his belt, and thrust his long legs out to enjoy to the full this reconnoitre that the gods had thrust upon him. Later on he was not quite so certain in his own mind that the gods had done the thrusting.

"Sing to me, Little Brown Dove," he murmured, and then drawn by the magic and the witchery of her wonderful eyes and the queer little seductive movement of her red lips, he let one of his great arms drop, seemingly by accident, on to her shoulders, and a moment or two later that same hand drawn by the electricity that seemed to emanate from the piccaninny-like figure, slipped down to the tiny little waist and nestled there drawing Little Brown Dove to him, and she all unresisting leant the full of her tiny weight against his body until moved by a fool impulse that he had to confess to himself had not come to him from the gods, he tightened his arm, and lifting the almost baby-like figure on to his lap, he held her in an embrace that he felt sure when he came to think the matter over, would not have been considered the orthodox thing in the convent school where Little Brown Dove had been educated. To tell the truth, at that period of his existence, McGlusky was not thinking of convents, and mighty small blame to him if his thoughts were not woven of that texture.

The head of the Little Brown Dove was resting against his vast corded neck, and her body, tiny as it was, was pressed impulsively against his own, and the aroma of her breath which came to his nostrils awakened a fire that was akin to madness in him. If he, the man of the seas, a man who had battled with storms and tempests and tornadoes felt the witchery of that

hour, the same must have been said in all truth of the daughter of the chrysanthemum, for with every moment she snuggled closer and closer and closer into him until he could feel the palpitation of her body with every breath she drew, and she drew many breaths as she sang for him. First a song of old Japan, a song that told of the birds flitting amongst the flowering trees that lined the streets of Tokio, and followed later by nigger minstrel songs sung with the words quaintly mispronounced that lent a piquancy to the girlish artistry. At last, apparently wearying of the melody she was making, Little Brown Dove ceased singing, and screwing herself round in his lap so that her wonderful little rounded bosoms were pressed hard up against his cast-steel chest, the wee flirt put an arm up around his neck, and turning her own flower-like face up to his, she drew him down towards her until his eyes were looking into hers at such close quarters that eyelash was entwined with eyelash and soon lips were entwined with lips.

McGlusky had sworn an oath to his mate that he would not get drunk ashore, and he kept that oath as far as *sake* or any other liquor brewed by man was concerned, but there are other forms of drunkenness a million times more potent than alcohol can ever produce, and McGlusky realized it that day as the exotic little daughter of the old East worked all her wondrous witchery upon him. She kissed him, ye gods, how she kissed, kissed him until her lips burnt and scorched, until the breath that came from between them was as hot as the breath of a sirocco, and so they sat for a long, long hour, and if the brown feathers were not scorched by her own heat then they must have been made of bronze. After a while Brown Dove began to talk; at first she just babbled the usual kind of prattling that women indulge in when engaged upon an amour of this sultry description, but by degrees it seemed as if the icy hand of common sense had got hold of her and

she began to talk of ships that go down to the sea and the men that sail in them, and by slow degrees she worked her way conversationally to the *Bonny Jean* and then began to ask questions that seemed to have neither point nor purpose in them, though when McGlusky came to piece those questions together later on, he realized that there had been quite enough of cunningly woven inquiries concerning the ship's purpose at sea and his own interest in the Arctic regions to make them as dangerous as they had been subtle.

All at once, some query that dropped from the little red lips struck some chord of suspicion in the mind of the big berserker and caused him to give himself a jolt, and realizing how near he had been to being entrapped he lifted the tiny image down from his knees, and laughed in her face, and as he laughed he said:

"Ye wean, I ought to take shame ta myself for the doings o' this day, if I had left without seeing through your designs, ye sweet little, beautiful, quaint little piece o' Eastern cajolery, ye are as subtle as sin and as deep as the sea, wha' I did is nothing new to ye and ye deserve to pay the price o' your treachery."

The damsel seemed confused by this sudden change of manner, but she soon recovered from this feeling and was as unabashed and as unashamed as only an Eastern woman can be when caught in the act of a double distilled deceit. For about half an hour longer Mac stood talking to, and toying with Little Brown Dove, but he was on his guard now, for he realized that he had been playing with a piece of two-edged steel that might very easily have wounded him to the quick. Just as he was about to say adieu to the bewitching sensuous wee mite of femininity, Mac, stooping, placed both his hands under her armpits and, lifting her as though she was a toy, he offered his mouth for her caressing, and the dainty little Jezebel took his offer and her Asiatic eyes drank their fill of his that were

now dancing with devilment. When the kissing episode was ended, Mac put the mite of womanhood back upon her feet, and drawing a handsome present from his pocket, he slipped it into her tiny hand, and she, cooing like her namesake, the brown dove, made sounds in her throat like the mating call of a dove in the season of nesting.

As Mac moved off through the doorway, his glorious shoulders squared and his big head carried high, he suddenly put into practice an old trick of his, for stopping in his stride he wheeled like a flash and fixed keen eyes upon the face of the dusky deceiver, and what he read there made him feel well rewarded for his acuteness, for as his eyes flashed over her surprised face he read as plainly as though it had been printed in characters of stone the treachery of this romantically fascinating creature with whom he had toyed so amorously for so long. As soon as he had regained his ship he called Ching How to him, and having closed and locked his cabin door, he said in a voice so low that no eavesdropper could have heard his conversation with the Chinaman:

"Ching How, to-morrow you will go ashore to the home of Herosha, the trader, and there you will make an excuse, if one is necessary, to meet the daughter of the trader, who is called the Little Brown Dove, and you make love to her, you understand?"

Ching How received this command as placidly and as unconcernedly as though his skipper had ordered him to go ashore and purchase a side of bacon. He was utterly impervious to surprise, this young man; at all events he could never be betrayed into showing any feeling no matter what order he received. He answered this in pidgin-English, which was a rarity with him when speaking to McGlusky, and all that he said was:

"Wellee good, you say me love, I go makee love.

You say Ching How go ashore and bring back the ears of the girl called Little Brown Dove. I go."

"Stow that talk, you yellow pagan," grumbled McGlusky, "I've never given you orders to bring away a woman's ears yet and I'm never likely to do so; all I want you to do is to make her talk—if you can, and pick out from among the lies that she will most surely tell you some grains of truth. I have a suspicion that she is a decoy sent here by men in high places to help the commander of the Japanese patrol boats, and an almighty cute little devil she is as you will find, so screw up all your yellow brains and pit them against her brown cuteness; don't underrate her, Ching How, you will find her as clever as she is conscienceless."

Ching How smiled one of his inscrutable smiles ere he answered, speaking this time in the rather grandiose phraseology he generally used when addressing the skipper of the *Bonny Jean*.

"No matter, Gracious One, if the Brown Dove has as many tricks as the centipede has legs, she will not walk over this Dull One's watchful eyes. The brown people," he added, "are clever, but they are shallow thinkers, whilst the yellow men are deep as the sea."

"All right," came McGlusky's reply, "don't under-rate that Little Brown Dove; she came almighty near to fooling me to-day, and although I say it myself, I am not the easiest man in the world to be fooled."

Anyone watching the handsome face of the Chinaman at that moment might have been forgiven if they thought they detected something like the shadow of a smile around the cleanly carved lips of Ching How, and perhaps just the suspicion of a shadow of a smile in his eyes ere he said:

"The So Wise and Crafty One will forgive this Dull and Stupid One for remarking that the All Wise One has too much red blood in his veins to play the game of subtlety with a beautiful woman. The All Com-

elling One looked upon the woman and knew he wanted her after the way of manflesh towards womanflesh, but a Chinaman is not built that way; to a Chinese a woman is something to possess, and pass on to whatever her destiny may demand of her. Passion with the Chinese is but the fulfilment of a law of nature; with a white man it is an all-compelling power, so nine times out of ten, a woman if she pleases the eye, will capture the senses of a white man, and the stronger the man the more likely is he to fall."

"To the devil with you and your pagan philosophy," growled McGlusky, who felt that he had been smitten by his henchman with a double-edged axe, and it hurt his vanity to realize how thoroughly and astutely the Chinese young man had read him and had foreshadowed the episode of that day. As he was leaving the cabin, Ching How said in that placid and unemotional voice of his:

"To-morrow I go to the house of the trader and to-morrow night I return, and I will have something to tell."

"Don't be too sure," growled McGlusky, "she may not talk."

"If she does not talk, the deductions I will make from her silences will prove useful to wise ears," came from the lips of Ching How with a college-bred drawl that made McGlusky remark as the little yellow figure disappeared through the cabin doorway:

"That damned pagan gets harder and harder to understand with every day that he is with me, and if I was not sure in the soul of me that he is as true as steel, I should be amazingly uneasy at his presence on board; as it is I feel strongly drawn to him."

The next day, true to his promise, Ching How went ashore and did not return until the shades of evening had fallen upon the sea, and surely enough he had something to tell his skipper. Just how he had got his

information from his conversation with the trader, his daughter and his servants, Ching How did not condescend to explain, but when he had finished, McGlusky, who had listened to his narrative without once interrupting him, exclaimed:

"Ching How, you have said a mouthful, and I hope to the Lord that you have not let your imagination run away with you, but that you have only told me the simple truth."

In response to this remark of his skipper's, Ching How drew from the mysterious recesses of his Oriental clothing a long waxen taper, and lighting this, he held it steadily in front of him, and looking squarely into his skipper's eyes, he said:

"When I blow this light out it will be a sign and a token that I swear by the gods of my fathers that if I do not speak the truth, my captain, then shall my soul be blown out as this taper is blown out by the breath of my mouth, and my soul shall walk for evermore in eternal darkness."

This was, as McGlusky well knew, the greatest and the grandest oath that the children of Confucius ever utter, and he did not believe the Chinaman lived on the whole face of the planet who would take that great oath and break it, for to the Chinese a light is a sign and a token of life itself: blow it out and it is gone forever. Calling the two mates and the bos'n to him, McGlusky recapitulated all that Ching How had told him in their interview.

"If you can believe what that Chink tells you, Skipper," exclaimed the second officer rather morosely, for he could never get over his national dislike of yellow men, "why then, this harbour is a good place for us to get out of, at present at any rate."

"It sure is," riposted McGlusky decisively, "and get out of it I am going to, for the gist of what Ching How has told me is that this is a hotbed of spydom for

the Japanese in this part of the world, and Herosha, the trader, and his diminutive little daughter are two of Japan's chief espionage officers in the whole of the Pacific. Think of it," he muttered a moment later, "that tiny little piece of womanhood who seemed to be nothing but an exotic sensualist is a master spy, and when I come to think of it, she has all the gifts necessary for the part."

"What is your own plan, Captain McGlusky?" gruffly interpolated the first mate, who never liked a redundant word in any matter that concerned him or his duties.

"My duty," riposted Mac, "is plain enough, God knows. There are times when a man can't move too fast for his own good, and this strikes me as being one of those times, for he who would race the wind must be fast on his feet." Then he chuckled and at last broke out into a laugh that rang through the cabin, and exclaimed:

"Fancy, that little devil nearly made a fool and a tool of Jamie McGlusky with all his lifelong experience in the ways of the world. She is an intrigant of the first water, but we'll fool her and her slippery father; we'll fool them to the top of their bent. Now listen: This is practically what Ching How's information amounts to. This island is a signalling station for all the Japanese brown patrols that are in their sealing territory; as soon as anything of a suspicious nature crops up that slippery gentleman, the so obsequious person, Herosha, the trader, moves away quickly to the highest point in the island which is only a mile or two back from his trading store, and on top of that he has the material for making a big bonfire which can be seen at night-time for leagues out at sea, and by day he does not build the fire high but sends up columns of smoke which can be seen in the sunlight almost as far, and read by the Japanese patrols as the fire by night,

and the moment that he has anything worth conveying he makes an excuse and gets away to perform his part of his work for his people. It was, according to Ching How's story, this fellow Herosha and his little piece of waxen goods, his daughter, who wormed out of the skipper of the Australian poacher, the *Saint Angela*, the secret of his intentions to start poaching when they did. No sooner had the *Saint Angela* set sail from this island than Herosha sent up his signal that he had built up nearby and communicated with the Jap patrol that we saw. Think of it, my lads, that little piece of femininity who laughed in my face so innocently, had on her hands the blood of those rough, tough, strong Australians who went to a watery grave right under our eyes when we were in the midst of the turbulent waters of the maelstrom—to hell with her."

"Amen to that," echoed the second officer.

"Well," retorted McGlusky, "it's us for the open sea. Up anchor and away, boys! "

CHAPTER X

WHITE MAN'S BRAINS VERSUS BROWN CUNNING

THE *Bonny Jean*, pointing her nose directly along the coast, swung herself out of the ice-bound waters of the island, her mission being to seek out the *Dirty Jane* and her skipper.

"I have a hunch," remarked McGlusky to his bos'n, "that we will pick the *Dirty Jane* up before we have travelled any very great distance along this coast. There is not a cuter man in these waters than old Jo Starboard, and he knows thoroughly the terrible risks that we are running every hour whilst we are carrying the seal pelts under hatches."

"It beats me, Skipper," answered the plain-spoken bos'n, "how you can put so much faith in that old English sailor, Jo Starboard."

"Why shouldn't I trust him?" demanded McGlusky, almost throwing his chin into the face of his interlocutor.

"Well, he drinks too much for my taste, Captain McGlusky, and a man who can swill liquor as old Jo does whilst he has men's lives in his keeping, well, he isn't quite what I call a number one white man."

McGlusky uttered a sharp, barking laugh ere answering:

"Drink! Yes, old Jo does that, I'll admit it, but he has been drinking so long that his brains have got hardened to liquor. I never call a man drunk myself until he hiccoughs with his feet as he walks, and no man ever saw Skipper Starboard unsteady on his pins."

"He do carry his grog almighty well, there's no denying that," was the bos'n's response. "All the same, I'd like him twice as well if he didn't drink half as much."

"Don't worry," came Mac's ready reply, "I've known old Jo Starboard more years than I like to think back on, and he won't fail us."

"Well, Skipper, you're the boss aboard this ship, and every man aboard her has unlimited faith in you, but may I ask why we are creeping along under half-sail when we might be running under a full head of canvas and find out whether old Jo is ahead there or not?"

Once more McGlusky laughed; the man had always a way of laughing when trouble seemed to be gathering round him.

"I never do anything without a purpose, bos'n, and I'm running under half-sail because I want to give the *Dirty Jane* every chance to pick us up at sea. I don't want to run into her in harbour at the next island."

"In the name of Mike, why not? Wouldn't it be easier to transfer the seal furs in harbour than out in the open waters of the sea, Skipper?" the bos'n demanded.

"It would be easier but it wouldn't be safer," replied the skipper, "because in every harbour here there are Japanese spies galore, so I am travelling slowly, remembering the Australian proverb that was dinned into me at the end of a stock whip when I was a kiddy, and it went this way: 'He who over hurries runs backwards,' and bos'n, I'm not going to do any backward running this trip if I can avoid it. I made one almighty bad break when I started fooling with that Little Brown Dove. Well, Jamie McGlusky now has got to be all brains and no regrets."

That McGlusky was right in his judgment, the next forty-eight hours proved, for the look-out man at the mast-

head suddenly shouted the news that a craft was bearing down upon them from right ahead. In that moment McGlusky's real nature came to the surface. Snatching the glasses from the hands of the second officer standing near, he focused them on the vessel that the look-out man had reported as bearing down upon them.

"Can't make head or tail of her at this distance," he snapped. "Mr. Mate, get your men ready, have the arms served out, and remember what I told you about my course of action if a Jap patrol hails us and commands us to shorten sail; serve out the arms, and lay the barrel of gunpowder in the hold, for by the God that made me, all that I said I'd do when I was detailing my line of conduct to you a few days ago, I will do. I'll blow the *Bonny Jean* to blazes, and with grappling hooks I'll take the Jap patrol to the bottom with us."

All was rush, hurry and ordered confusion during the next few minutes: cutlasses, pistols, rifles and pikes were served out to each man, and the barrel of gunpowder in the hold was attached by a fuse to the decks. The men absolutely fled about their business; so rapidly did they move, and their salty keenness and eager eyes backed up the bos'n's sentiments when he said:

"If this stranger that's making towards us is a Jap patrol, then by the breeks of Mahomet the Japs are going to sample a heck of a fight."

Then the man at the mast-head raised his voice and announced that the oncoming craft was the *Dirty Jane*. As this news reached his ears, McGlusky went bounding up the rigging like a human tornado, and soon his glasses were fixed on the oncoming craft. Keenly, almost fiercely, his eyes sought out every inch of the stranger, and then he, following the example of the man at the mast-head, sent the news below in a lion's roar.

"It's old Jo Starboard and the *Dirty Jane*, lads."

Clew up all sails—jump to it, you lazy spawn, jump to it."

Then Mac gave orders to stow the war-like weapons away, and to remove every trace of deadly warfare. Then his orders came crisp and unmistakable:

"Shift the hatches and begin to bring up the seal pelts at your best speed. We'll go alongside the *Dirty Jane* just as soon as ever we get within reaching distance."

The change from the exaltation of coming battle to the more humdrum avocations of daily toil was significantly noticeable in the demeanour of the *Bonny Jean's* crew; they were laughing and gibing at one another, and bandying grim jests that showed the real nature of the reckless blades. As soon as the *Dirty Jane* was within hailing distance, Mac, who had clewed up three-fourths of his sails, gave the order to the helmsman to run, or rather to allow the *Bonny Jean* to drift alongside the creeping iron derelict, and as soon as they came within grappling distance the grappling hooks were hurled from the *Bonny Jean* to the *Dirty Jane* and made fast by the latter, and then they drew up side by side on the sunlit sea. It took scarcely ten seconds for McGlusky to make his purpose clear.

"I'll explain everything later, Skipper Jo," he shouted. "Shift your hatches and haze every man aboard that old tub of yours, and we'll throw the seal skins over your bulwarks on to your decks and waste no time over it."

Skipper Jo proved that he was every inch a sailor and a commander, and he had his men jumping like kangaroo rats in the twinkling of an eye. The two crews, who knew to a nicety the hazards they were running, worked like galley slaves, but they needed no galley slaves' whips to drive them. As fast as the pelts came up from the bowels of the *Bonny Jean*, they were stowed under hatches by the *Dirty Jane*, and in an in-

conceivably short time the poached furs were transferred. Just before the finish of the transfer had taken place, McGlusky clambered over the rails and went aboard the iron tub, and clapping old Jo Starboard on the shoulders, he remarked:

"Well, old British bulldog, you have lived up to your reputation again, now we'll part, and I'll have to leave everything to you in regard to you making your getaway. You'll make your way to Frisco and sell the furs at the best profit that you can, and I'll join you as soon as it is convenient for me to do so, but I'll stay here for a while after I have scrubbed the *Bonny Jean* so clean that even a Jap officer coming aboard could not smell out a single atom of truth against us poachers, and then, when I have given you plenty of time and have covered your tracks by hanging about the danger zone, I'll follow you to the Golden Gate. Now let us have one glass, and a glass all round to our crews, and we'll hurry off to the Arctic seas, and to hell with the Jap patrols!"

A nod and a sharp word from old Jo Starboard brought the grog into evidence, and as the skippers raised their glasses McGlusky tossed free and fair his adieux to the skipper and the men took it up, and the shouts of "To hell with the brown patrol" rang out over the waters and the decks of both ships. Then having drained their glasses, the men returned to their places and went about their work as unconcernedly as though they had not just been engaged in a deadly dangerous undertaking.

The *Dirty Jane* swung her nose round and pointed her bows towards the distances where lay the United States of America, whilst McGlusky, full of guile, swung the *Bonny Jean* away from her former course and went tacking towards a little cluster of islands that he knew of and would soon be in evidence. He had selected this particular spot in his mind because he

shrewdly suspected that the little atolls that he intended to visit would be a place of rendezvous for the Jap patrols, and he meant to thrust his head right into the lion's jaws in order to avert suspicion, but as the *Bonny Jean* went tacking along on her new course, McGlusky had every man aboard, officers included, at work scrubbing and hosing out the hold of the *Bonny Jean*, where the seal pelts had been packed, and when this was finished he burnt enough sulphur between decks to make the bos'n remark:

"If it doesn't smell like the kitchens o' hell, it smells next door to it."

"Don't talk so free of your birthplace," replied McGlusky, with a broad grin. "I know why I fired all that sulphur, and if a Jap officer boards us and wants to know where the smell of sulphur comes from, I shall tell him that I have had a bad attack of measles aboard this ship and have burnt the sulphur to take the plague away, for you know that whilst whites dread and fear smallpox as one of the most deadly diseases, the Japs, like most Asiatics, almost laugh at smallpox, but they dread the measles worse than they would dread the touch of the devil's whiskers, and the strange thing is that there is no disease that is more liable to be fatal to the brown man than measles, so there we have a reason for burning sulphur fore and aft, above and below, and if they can smell seal skins through the reek of sulphur, why, they must have noses that ought to make them capable of smelling the trail of a herring shoal at sea, or a policeman ashore."

By the time McGlusky had fumigated the *Bonny Jean* to his heart's content, he was well upon his way towards the little group of islands that were in reality more atolls than islands. He did not hurry over the journey, and contented himself with an easy run under half the sail that he would have carried had he been hurrying the progress of the *Bonny Jean*. So low in the

water did these islands lie that a vessel steering towards them came almost on top of them before sighting the land. There was a nice harbour, however, waiting to receive the *Bonny Jean*, and as McGlusky heard his anchor go down to the depths he knew that the holding there was exceptionally good. As usual he had very little time to wait before the news of the arrival of the vessel had spread and numberless natives were scrambling up over the bulwarks, and McGlusky and Ching How and the nigger cook had hard work to spy out amongst the natives which were bona fide sons of the soil and which were Japanese coolies in disguise. The report that came to him rather startled him because he was to learn that a very large percentage indeed of the so-called natives were children of Japan, and before he had been anchored there a day he had the doubtful pleasure of seeing a couple of crafts come sailing in that he knew by instinct to be members of the Japanese brown patrol, and it was not long before a boat put off from one of these strangers and came briskly through the water to the side of the *Bonny Jean*, and a moment later an officer came clambering over the side. It was not Mac's policy to quarrel with the officials of Japan, neither did it march with his inclination to be too friendly, so he greeted the new arrival with courtesy that was of the stiffest and most formal order. The Japanese officer did nothing in the way of ameliorating the feeling that fairly exuded from McGlusky; he was as stiff as the sword blade that swung at his side. Saluting the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* formally, the officer queried:

"Is your stay here to be brief, Captain, or are you intending to stay for any length of time?"

Instantly Mac's fierce temper crowded itself to the surface, and he replied gruffly:

"Just what my intentions are here in a harbour that belongs to no nation under heaven is my business; and

is no concern of the nation whose flag you are flying from your mast-head."

"No offence was intended," came the response. "I merely asked the question to satisfy my curiosity."

"Strange curiosity," McGlusky replied, "that made you have your boat's crew row all the way from your ship to mine, but I will satisfy your cravings to this extent by saying I shall stay here as long as it suits my purpose, not an hour longer or an hour less."

The upper lip of the naval officer curled contemptuously as he answered:

"In a sense these are Japanese waters, or to be more correct they are in a manner under a Japanese mandate."

"Since when?" thundered McGlusky, his eyes blazing.

The Jap shifted rather uneasily on his feet, and shrugging his shoulders, said:

"Since my visit to you seems so unwelcome, perhaps the best thing I can do is to remove myself, but if you are caught within the prohibited distance of the mainland where you were so recently, I will very rapidly convince you that Japan is within her rights in boarding you, overhauling you, and taking stock of anything that you may be carrying above or below board."

"Wait till you catch me within the prohibited area," Mac flung back. When the naval officer had removed himself, and his boat and his crew were well out of earshot, the first mate remarked to McGlusky with a half-apologetic smile:

"Rather rough on that little brown boulder weren't you, Skipper?"

"I meant to be," came Mac's prompt reply. "I wanted to fill his mind cram jammed full with the idea that we are hanging about these waters for no purpose beneficial to Japanese interests."

"Why? By the Lord Harry, it seems like tickling the tiger with a vengeance, Captain, to me."

"It is my way of fooling these very clever and astute sons of the brown people," almost cooed McGlusky. "I want the patrol to hang around watching me and the *Bonny Jean* for a couple of weeks if I possibly can, and that will give the *Dirty Jane*, slow as she is, the start on her homeward way that will take her out of all danger. Now, I'll take a couple of boats' crews ashore, and you see to it that every man carries his cutlass with him."

The bos'n, who overheard this order, grinned joyously, for the chunky man was of the sort that loves a fight and looked upon it as a bean feast. As he paused, looking up into the grim face, he said:

"Skipper, am I to make one of the shore-going party?"

"You sure are, bos'n," replied McGlusky, "and I want you to use your brains as well as your hands, providing the necessity arises and you and the boat's crew have to use your hands."

"I'll take your orders, Skipper, with regard to how I am to use my brains, but if it comes to the using of our cutlasses, why, I think you can leave that matter to me."

As McGlusky wheeled to give an order to the men who were lowering the boat, the bos'n said:

"Who is to have charge of the shore party, Skipper?"

"Well, I have made up my mind to give the command of the party my own especial benediction this time."

"You mean you are going ashore with us, Skipper?"

"That is my intention, anything against it, bos'n?" McGlusky was full of jocular and seemed to be looking upon what might happen when his boat's crew landed and met up with a crew of brown sailors as a

boy looks formal at a frolic. The same feeling seemed to pervade the spirits of every man who went ashore that day. Mac had taken two boat-loads of men, and they were the pick of his crew. Ching How and Moonshine, the nigger cook, were in one boat because in all matters they were perfectly inseparable, and it was in McGlusky's mind to see just how Ching How could comport himself in a *mêlée* should the occasion for such an event arise. Mac had no intention of forcing trouble but he meant to show the brown men that the men serving under the American flag were not going to permit themselves to be bull-dozed by the brown race.

When they arrived ashore they strolled about carelessly. There were only three drinking cabooses in the place and Mac sent the bos'n and the greater portion of his men to the nearest of these places of entertainment with orders to go and refresh themselves, but to do everything with what decency should ask of them to preserve peace.

"We didn't come ashore," he told them, "in order to make trouble or to pick a row, but if trouble is forced upon us, then by the Lord Harry, give a good account of yourselves. I won't be far away when the fracas starts."

They happened to call at the first pleasure house and the sailors from the *Bonny Jean* meandered carelessly along to the second resort. There they found quite a number of girls ostensibly acting as waitresses, but that they were bent on captivating any sailor who came ashore they soon made evident, and so attractive were they in their intentions that very soon all thoughts of trouble of any kind evaporated from the minds of the crew of the *Bonny Jean*, and being hearty, rough-and-tumble men born to the sea and its ways, they just fell into step with what appeared to them to be the spirit

of the place, and all was going as merrily as a crow at a pigeon's wedding when a strong body of brown sailors put in an appearance, and every man carried arms, a fact that McGlusky, who had come along—though he did not interrupt his crew in their drinking—did not fail to notice.

If anyone had asked McGlusky later just how, or what happened, the skipper of the *Bonny Jean* could not have told to have saved his life. The bos'n was always emphatic when describing the commencement of the mêlée that the brown men deliberately planned trouble, and just as deliberately and cold-bloodedly made it, according to the bos'n, who said he was sitting with a lass on each side of him, and at the actual outbreak of hostilities he had one arm around each of his dusky admirers and companions, then a brown man passing by had jerked the stool upon which the bos'n was sitting from under him and sent him sprawling upon his back upon the floor, whereupon the bos'n, rising, waited not upon ceremony, but launching a blow at the brown man's face with his fist, he sent his assailant sprawling all ends up. As if this happening had been a pre-arranged signal, the brown seamen rose from their seats as one man, and cutlass in hand, started to drive the white adventurers from the pleasure resort into the street, and the moment this dawned on McGlusky, he leapt from his seat, and drawing his cutlass, he uttered the wild Australian bushman's yell that all men knew him by all over the world when his berserk mood was upon him.

Leaping to the head of his men, he gave the nearest Japanese a lesson in cutlass play that must have astonished that brown gentleman, and his sailors, revelling in such a leader, followed suit and went to work with heart and hand to prove to the brown men that whatever they may have done to the sailors and soldiers of China and to the seamen and soldiery of Russia, they

had a different proposition in front of them when faced by men of America allied to Australians. The Japanese outnumbered the white men nearly three to one, and felt at the outset more than a little bit confident of making a clean sweep of the place, but these foemen, whom they had so wantonly provoked, proved to be of very different mettle to either Russians or Chinamen; they rushed to the onset, fighting like men possessed of devils, and the fact that they had odds of three to one, did not daunt them in the slightest degree.

Fierce as the fighting was, McGlusky had ample time to notice how both Moonshine, the nigger cook, and Ching How, the Chinese, carried themselves in the hour of battle. The yellow lad fought with the cunning of ten devils, never wasting his strength with slashing strokes. He conserved his power and used the point for thrusting with his cutlass as adroitly as though it were a fencing rapier, though to all intents and purposes a cutlass is a cut and guard weapon and not too well adapted to deadly thrusts, but so flexible was the wrist of Ching How that he managed to convert the heavy weapon into something pretty nearly as ugly as a rapier for his kind of work, and he worked swiftly and hard in spite of his slender little frame. On the other hand, Moonshine went back at once to a great extent to the days when his forbears were warriors in the African wilds, and his white teeth gleamed between his ruddy black lips, and his ferocious battle yell rang high above all the tumult as he hewed and slashed, seemingly careless of whether he might be spitted by an opponent. His one idea seemed to be how many men he could lay at his feet, and that darky accounted for quite a fair quota of the men who fell that day in the little old shebeen in Arctic Bay.

From the very first moment when the fracas had commenced the bos'n had swung himself round so that he could fight back to back with his skipper, for McGlusky

was not quite a man in the eyes of the deep-chested, dumpy-legged bos'n; he was a religion and it was for the bos'n to see to it that no stroke struck from behind could disable his giant chieftain, and never in the whole history of the clan McGlusky, from the far-away days when they lived in the Scottish Highlands, had a McGlusky had a more loyal clansman at his back than the bos'n proved in that rough and tumble mêlée. It was a pleasure gathering, for the white men at any rate, for they proved that day to their own satisfaction, and to the disillusionment of the brown men, that man to man the warriors of the Mikado were no match for the fighting forces of America.

A couple of days later the two Japanese vessels cleared out of the harbour, without making any attempt to regain their lost laurels. They had had one taste of American valour and that taste made a feast for them for the time being. During the time the *Bonny Jean* had remained at the low-lying atolls Ching How was allowed full time for shore leave, and he took advantage of his freedom by haunting the homestead of the trader Herosha, and those of the *Bonny Jean's* crew who also went ashore brought back news, with many grins, that the Chinese boy was first favourite in the graces of the Little Brown Dove. Practically everyone on board enjoyed this joke, excepting the second mate, who had never got over his dislike of Ching How, a dislike that was more racial than personal. Hearing the second officer grumbling to the bos'n concerning Ching How's shore leave, McGlusky put a straight question to him, saying:

"What have you on your mind, Mr. Mate, with regard to Ching How? Do you think that he is liable to play the part of a traitor to us?"

"I'll give it to you, straight from the shoulder, Skipper," came the gruff retort. "I wouldn't trust any Asiatic, and that's the plain truth of the matter, and

besides this Chink of ours, Ching How, has had the advantage of a white man's education, and it has been my experience that Asiatics receiving a white man's training are like coloured men receiving the white man's religion, they are all darned hypocrites, and utterly unreliable. If that little devil in kimonos ashore takes into her head to make a fool of Ching How, she'll twist him round her fingers as surely as she would twist any white man who started monkeying with her, for she is as artful as a forty-acre paddock of monkeys."

"You're wrong," retorted McGlusky, "wrong all the time with regard to Ching How. That Jap girl may be artful, but Ching How can give her a day's start in a week's march and beat her by miles for sheer shrewdness. She is cunning, but he is clever and highly intellectual. Don't you lose any sleep, Mr. Mate, over Ching How's doings ashore. When he comes aboard I'll wager that he brings me a packet of useful information."

"He may fool you, sir," grumbled the mate, "but he won't fool me, and if it is proved later to your satisfaction, and to the satisfaction of the crew that the Chink has been playing a double game and double-crossing us, why, by the Lord that made me, I'll cut his yellow heart out."

McGlusky, taking a stride, towered over the mate like a lion, and his voice took on a stern menacing note as he said:

"That's all right, Mr. Mate, but make sure, dead sure, that the Chink has played double with us before you start cutting his heart out, or by the God that made me I'll do things to you that will make throat-cutting seem a pleasant pastime. Find him guilty, prove him guilty before a jury of his shipmates. Then, why I'll be the last man to stand up for him, but I'll have no executions through mere racial dislike aboard the *Bonny Jean*. Get that inside that stubborn skull of

yours and think it over—think it over, Mr. Mate, think deeply before you commit yourself to any act of violence."

When Ching How did come aboard there was nothing in his manner to show that he was elated over any discovery that he might have made, nor for that matter was there any sign of dejection about him. He had just the same placid face, unreadable to a European, that he had had all along, but as soon as he got McGlusky to himself in the skipper's cabin, he opened out a budget of news that made McGlusky whistle shrilly through his teeth.

"So," he ejaculated, "that's the little game is it? The vessels that left here recently are to make their way straight back to Japan with the intention of seeking permission from the Government at Tokio for them to hoist the Japanese flag over these three atolls, and that will mean making this harbour a Japanese port to all intents and purposes, and then, Lord help the skipper, whether he be skipper of a poaching craft or a trading craft or any other kind of vessel that comes here under any white man's flag."

He sat musing for a while after this outburst and then said:

"May God put some sense into the heads of the British and American Government before it is too late to prevent the Japanese building up an Empire in the Pacific by the grabbing of islands that have as yet been unclaimed, and their name is legion."

Mac was in a quandary after receiving this information from Ching How. He could not quit the harbour without arousing the suspicions of the Japs, whom he knew would soon signal to some member of their brown patrol the news that he had left the harbour of the atolls, and that would put them on the track of the *Dirty Jane*, and Mac's first thought was of his companion on the old iron derelict, and at the same time

Mac was now deadly anxious to get back to Frisco himself so that he might pull some strings that would awaken the American Government from its lethargy.

"It's no use making my way to Sydney and attempting to stir up action from the Australian Government, because up to date the Australians have not begun to think nationally. They are too prone to let the British Government do its thinking for them. Some day they'll wish they had had a little more courage and a lot more enterprise and had done the things that so badly need doing in these waters. I'll give the Japs this credit," he continued, musing raspingly. "They do not go crazy over sport, as the Australians do, nor do they tie up body and soul in the task of dollar hunting, as the Americans have been doing and seem content to go on doing. They are out to build themselves into the paramount power of the Pacific, and if I was a Jap I should be almighty proud of my country and of its wide-awake Government, but being as I am, a white man to the core through, I say to hell with the Japs and their dream of Empire! though there are some booby politicians in England, who, being brainless, say and think differently."

In the end Mac decided to run the *Bonny Jean* back to that island, where he had selected a spot to careen the barque, and having once decided upon a course he did as he always did, he up-heaved his anchor and was soon speeding upon his way, and the mileage that the *Bonny Jean* cut out under a strong following wind did not make it appear that she was overmuch in need of careening and scraping and cleaning. But there are many things done at sea that are not always understandable to those who are merely lookers on. When Mac picked up the island he was in search of he had no difficulty whatever in running into the little harbour, and finding that there were four or five vessels of dif-

ferent nationalities there, he at once ran the *Bonny Jean* along to the spot he had formerly selected, and the work of careening her was soon an accomplished fact, and the men, falling to with a will, soon cleaned the bottom of the dandy craft until she was as fit for ocean travel as she had been the day she had been turned out by her builders to commence her wayward career.

Came a day when the barque took the water again and took it like a duck, and then McGlusky decided to point her bows towards America, he considering that by this time the slow old tub, the *Dirty Jane*, had got sufficient start to make her perfectly safe from Japanese interference, because by this time Mac knew that unless something unforeseen had happened to Skipper Jo Starboard, the *Dirty Jane* must be well within the zone patrolled by American mercantile marine and American warships, and that being the case he had no fear of anything happening to the skipper, his crew or his craft. Mac had mapped out for himself a line of return that would take him clear of Japan, and was on the point of giving orders to some of the men about the lifting of the anchors when the first officer drew his attention to a craft that was just entering the harbour mouth.

"Look at her, Skipper," exclaimed the first mate. "I seem to know this craft. Hullo!" he exclaimed, almost in the same breath. "There she's breaking out the stars and stripes, and by gosh, Skipper, it's a long time since the sight of anything has pleased my eyes as the sight of the star-spangled banner does at this moment."

Focusing his glasses on the newcomer, McGlusky ate her up with his eyes as she came slowly heading her way along the bay.

"I know her too, somewhere," cried Mac, and then as an afterthought he shouted: "Throw out the

American flag at our mast-head, and do it on the jump, boys."

Only a few seconds elapsed after the order had left McGlusky's lips ere the flag that shall be, must be the dominant flag in the whole of the Pacific, floated from the peak of the *Bonny Jean*, and as that bonny banner flaunted itself proudly in the Arctic air McGlusky roared to his men:

"Now jump to it and up the rigging every man jack of you," and as this order was obeyed with gleeful celerity, McGlusky roared: "Three cheers for the flag which speaks for the freedom of these seas, out of your heart, out of your lungs. Let her go, boys!"

No need for the giant of a man to echo that command twice, it found a ready echo in the hearts of that rough-necked crew who, with all their faults, loved the flag they sailed under. Out rang their voices in a shout that ripped the sentient air to tatters. Once again they roared their cheers, and the crew aboard the big yacht that was flying the American flag, and was creeping slowly along the bay, manned their rigging in response to the welcome that had come to them so unexpectedly here in this land of ice and snow, and as they climbed aloft they, in response to a wave from their skipper's hand, lifted up their voices, and Americans greeted Americans in that waste of waters. As their voices floated across the waves that had suddenly broken into a sparkle of light as the sunshine broke through the grey clouds, McGlusky, who had focused his glasses upon the deck of the yacht, suddenly shouted to his officers:

"Look, men, if that isn't Miss Judy Hiscox aboard that yacht, you may call me a square head!"

Soon every pair of glasses in the possession of the *Bonny Jean's* officers were focused on the deck of the yacht, and cries of delight and astonishment broke from the lips of the officers for they, too, had recognized Judy,

and as soon as the crew got the news thoroughly into their consciousness they raised a yell that would have shaken the shrouds of the *Bonny Jean* had she been under full sail. Calling to his signalman, McGlusky gave the order:

"Signal the lady aboard the yacht yonder and give her a welcome from the *Bonny Jean* and all aboard her."

The signalman, an ex-naval officer of the American fleet, very rapidly flashed the signal to the yacht, and got an answer back with a rapidity that told him and told McGlusky also that there were men aboard who also had had American naval training.

"Dunno what it means," chortled the skipper of the *Bonny Jean*, "but I'm dashed glad to be in touch with something from the land that breeds a free white nation."

Scarcely had these words left McGlusky's lips ere a man aboard the *Jean* saw the anchor flash into the water from the yacht and they knew that the newcomer was coming to a standstill for the purpose of getting into touch with the *Bonny Jean*.

"Out with the boat," roared McGlusky. "I'll go aboard and pay my respects to the lady, and to the skipper and the crew of the yacht. Jump to it, boys, and let our friends yonder see that I have not a pack of cripples aboard this little old barque of ours."

If the folks aboard the yacht, as they watched the boat being lowered from the *Bonny Jean's* side, were of the opinion that the boat's crew were cripples, they must have had an astonishingly high opinion of sailor men in general.

"Put your backs into it, boys," chortled McGlusky, a laugh gurgling in the depths of his throat, "put your backs into it, you lazy dogs, and pull till your shoulder-blade bones knock together."

Just before McGlusky started to climb up the side of

the yacht, he gave this command in a low voice that had a ring of grim earnestness in it:

"Say, not a word, not a whisper, not the ghost of a hint about anything that savours of seal poaching whilst we are in the vicinity of this craft. Get me, eh?" and accepting the sharp nods that came from every man, McGlusky knew that his very wide-awake crew would not become talkative concerning the illicit business they had been engaged upon when they had been working in the tumbling waters of the coast of the mainland.

Scarcely had McGlusky swung his leg over the yacht's rail ere the hand of Judy Hiscox was thrust into his own, and the whole-hearted grip she gave him told him more eloquently than words could have done that she had forgotten the impulsive interlude that had occurred between them just before they had parted and Judy had gone on her message to the United States. Man like, McGlusky instantly began to build castles in the air, for Judy had made a deeper impression upon him than even he himself had been aware of at the time, and whilst he did not imagine that he could quite hear marriage bells ringing, he yet allowed himself to hope that things had a roseate hue.

Judy's face was all aglow with excitement, and leaning over the rail she shouted joyous greetings to every member of the crew, calling each man by his name, or his nickname, and by so doing she won the hearts of all those rough blades.

As Mac went aboard the yacht with his mighty shoulders squared and his giant limbs moving with a lithesome freedom almost like boyhood, he received a shock that made him absolutely gasp, for, standing behind Judy Hiscox, in all the bloom of his young manhood, was the man whom he had learnt to know as Jack London, the writing feller. As soon as he had freed his hand from that of Judy, he grasped the

youngster by both shoulders, and shook him until he rattled in every bone of him, a greeting that London replied to by driving a hefty right hand into McGlusky's ribs.

"You're the last man in this good world that I should have expected to see, Jack London," cried the big fellow.

"Well," came the ready reply, "you never heard of me fighting shy of a chance to run into a bit of adventure, did you?"

"No," chuckled Mac, "from all I've ever heard you were a darned sight too eager to get the smell of excitement into your nostrils."

Suddenly a voice with a Yankee accent and a drawl broke in upon the greetings that were taking place between Jack London and Jamie McGlusky, the free-booter.

"Waal," exclaimed the voice, "I should have thought, Captain McGlusky, your first business on striking this deck would have been for you to greet the skipper."

"Sorry, Captain, darned sorry, but I know you will excuse this breach of etiquette, seeing that I was bowled off my feet by meeting two such close friends as I have now run into, but let's make up for it now, Captain. Here's my hand."

"Murphy is the name, and Ireland was the birth-place of my grandfather," said the yacht's skipper as he gripped McGlusky's mighty paw and hung on to it as though he was greeting a long-lost brother. He explained the heartiness of his greeting a few moments later by saying:

"I've heard of you from one end of the seven seas to the other, Skipper McGlusky, and one of the great hopes of my life was that sooner or later I might bump into you, and now the sea-gods have granted that wish."

"Well," grinned Mac, "what do you think of what you have run into, eh?"

"I won't make any rash statements," chuckled the skipper. "There's so much of you to look over that it's going to take quite a time to form my proper estimate, but in the meantime let me introduce to you the Senator Stonehall, who is really the commander of this yacht. Speaking of the yacht, McGlusky, I guess you have noticed, so don't need to be told, that we carry both steam and sailing power aboard this craft."

"I'd noticed it! No one who had been any length of time at sea could fail to observe that at a glance," chuckled Mac.

At this juncture Miss Judy Hiscox intervened, and by her speech and demeanour soon proved that she was not only an important personage aboard the yacht but a privileged one. Smiling into McGlusky's face the pioneer woman said breezily:

"You remember when I left the *Bonny Jean* you gave me a mission to fulfil, and that mission in the first place was directed towards meeting a Senator of the Western States of America, a man who had the ear and the confidence of the American President?"

"I remember that, right well," answered McGlusky, returning at once to his business-like manner.

"Well," was Miss Judy's ready reply as she half-turned to greet a man standing near, "this gentleman is the Senator of whom I spoke to you, a very, very close friend of mine in the days prior to the time when you and I had met."

McGlusky immediately shot a swift and penetrating glance in the direction of the man who had been described to him as one of America's most powerful intellects, and the face that came under his scrutiny fully upheld the description he had heard concerning its owner, for the Senator looked every inch a maker of history. His brow was lofty, his eyes keen, cool and

penetrating, and his mouth something that might have been chiselled out of marble; brains, determination and courage and lofty ideals were written all over the countenance which met McGlusky's scrutiny, and Mac's heart absolutely jumped until it almost missed a beat, for he knew that his message to the President of the United States which Judy had carried had not missed fire, otherwise such a man as this would never have been dispatched in answer to it. The moment the introduction was over the Senator, with an apologetic bow and a grim smile, to the attendant folk, linking his arm in that of McGlusky, said:

"Now, Captain McGlusky, let us take a stroll up and down the deck. I have a few words for your private ear, words that I think you are as thirsty to hear as I know I am eager to get rid of."

Without any audible reply McGlusky swung into his stride and paced off with his interlocutor. As soon as the Senator was sure that no eavesdropper, intentional or otherwise, could catch the sound of his voice, he unbosomed himself to McGlusky, saying:

"Sir, the message which you sent to the President of the United States came to us in the nick of time, for we had received several well-founded complaints concerning the high-handed manner of the brown nation towards American, and other white races sailing these seas, and your communication was just what was required to clinch the opinions that were seething in the minds of not only the President, but of most of the responsible members of the American Government, and, sir, I may tell you without any waste of words that I was commissioned at once to charter a vessel and accompanied by Miss Judy Hiscox make my way to these Arctic islands and there hoist the American flag, and nail up America's notice to the world that she claims a mandate over these groups of islands."

"All the islands?" This query came like the snap of a gun from McGlusky's lips.

"No, not all the islands. I have been informed since I left America by my skipper, who is a man familiar with these waters, that there are three very small and low-lying islands, or as my skipper describes them, atolls, over which we do not require to exercise a mandate, but the other groups of islands I am most certainly empowered to fly our flag over, and," the Senator's eyes met McGlusky's and held them with the light of a steely purpose in them as he continued: "I think you know America well enough, Captain McGlusky, to be aware that any violation of the rights expressed by the floating of the American flag will be a prelude to war, no matter what nation offers that flag an insult."

McGlusky halted in his tracks, and throwing up his hands with an all-compelling gesture, he remarked:

"I thank the white man's God, sir, for living long enough to see America still breeds men who put national honour before the accumulation of dollars."

The Senator laughed a low grating laugh, like the bite of steel on steel, and then said: "The hunting of the dollar is a bug that will soon pass from American consciousness the moment the very shadow of war looms in the air. I know of nothing, sir," he continued, "that will clear up the atmosphere from one end of the United States to the other like the war tocsin, and I do not say this boastfully, sir: woe to the nation that sounds that tocsin. I know, as you appear to know, sir, that America, through the long years of peace and riches, has waxed fat and obese, but that is only a passing phase, all nations have passed through it at one time or another in their existence. Now, sir, let's get to our muttons, shall we? I should greatly like your advice as a practical man of affairs working here on the spot: What do you think is our best line of action?"

Over which of the islands should we claim a mandate first? "

Like a flash of steel in the sunlight came McGlusky's ready answer. "Your job lies right under the heel of your hand, sir. This island against which we are anchored must be your first place of operation, for from here the agents of the brown Government flash signals to the brown patrols in all these waters; at any rate all the waters adjacent to us. You will not have knowledge of what I am going to tell you, but scarcely had your anchors struck the waters, and your men loosed the American flag at your mast-head, when a column of spiral smoke went up into the air from the highest range on this island, and that smoke carried a signal to any brown patrol that might be within eyesight."

"What could such a smoke signal convey?" came the quick retort from the Senator.

"I'll tell you. It could not of course tell what you were going to do here, but they had seen a smart yacht arrive, drop anchor and fly the American flag from its peak, and that information the Japanese secret agent of this island, who is known as the trader Herosha, though he is in reality an ex-member of the Japanese naval forces, would consider of sufficient importance to communicate to every unit of the brown patrol."

"Our brown friends seem to be mighty thorough," smiled the Senator.

"They are thorough, sir. We must give them credit for that, and if they guess what your mission is here they will not be slow in attempting to forestall your action, and hoist the flag of Japan and claim a mandate for that country over this island."

"Can't help admiring the beggars," riposted the Senator. "We'll show them that although Uncle Sam has grown fat and wheezy and lazy through the long years of peace, he can on occasions get up a burst of speed that will take some beating."

Straightening his massive shoulders, Mac saluted the Senator and went over the yacht's rail into his boat, for he was a lover of action.

Mac's orders to his boat's crew were terse and to the point.

"Put your back into your work, boys, for Babylon's a-falling."

The men did not in the least understand this cryptic remark of his, but they did know that he meant to get speed out of them, and speed they gave him. In record time they were alongside the *Bonny Jean*, and Mac selected another boat's crew under the command of the second officer to go ashore with him and the picked men that he had already in his boat. One of the last to come sliding down the side of the *Bonny Jean* was Ching How, dressed in the loose voluminous clothing that the little Chinese always affected both aboard and on shore leave. Mac had not really intended the Chink, as the second officer still continued to call Ching How, to make one of the party, but that very astute little person considered that if there were privileges lying around loose it was Ching How's right to collect them. There was a race between the boats of the yacht and the *Bonny Jean* towards the little jetty which pushed out into the sea not far from the spot where the trader Herosha's home and place of business lay.

With rare diplomacy McGlusky ordered his men to ease up in their stroke as they approached the jetty, so as to give the American Senator the privilege of being the first to land the party that was to mandate the island. As soon as they had their feet ashore the Senator, going to McGlusky, said:

"Captain, you must lead us now. Go ahead and we will follow."

Mac did not reply in words, he merely nodded, and calling his men, he took the lead, and there behind him

trotted little Ching How, and as they passed the entrance of trader Herosha's premises the trader himself came out and saluted them, and by his side moved the Little Brown Dove, looking as fresh as paint, and as smilingly lovely as anything that had ever come from the hands of the Great Modeller. Herosha betrayed his naval training by the salute he gave McGlusky, and Mac smiled a grim smile as he recognized this fact, and he muttered to himself:

"We'll take some of the starch out of you before you are much older, my brown friend."

None the less the grim look left his face as his eyes roamed over the features of the Little Brown Dove, who was smiling her most heavenly smile in his direction, a fact which was not unnoticed by Ching How. The American Senator, who had sharp eyes, also noticed the little figure, and as he was pacing only a yard away from McGlusky, he remarked with a quizzical quirk to his lips:

"A snappy little piece of goods, eh, Skipper? Does that happen to be one of the perquisites of a trading skipper, eh?" and then added with a chuckle: "I don't wonder that you want to annex this island, my friend."

"I don't want to annex anything that's on it, if that is what you mean, Senator," riposted Mac. If either McGlusky or the Senator had been watching the face of Ching How during that dialogue he might have been surprised at what the expression on the beautiful Chinese face conveyed, but the doors of destiny were not yet wide open for McGlusky or the Senator to see beyond the portals, though that opening was not far away. The clamber to the top of the hill was done in double quick time, for both the American sailors and McGlusky's roughnecks were in perfect training, though the snow in places was lying loose and made heavy weather of the going, they yet managed to keep

up a pace that would have told any watching eye that they were all under the control of an iron discipline.

The Americans had brought with them a pole already rigged for the carrying of the American flag, and the way they set to work to hoist that flag was a thing that any watching eyes would have taken note of, and there was at least one pair of watching eyes behind them, over the brow of the hill which they had so recently climbed. Those eyes belonged to the ex-naval man, known on the island as Herosha the trader, but the instant the American flag was hauled up and sprung so that it streamed out in all its silken loveliness in the crisp air, the eyes and the rest of the belongings of Herosha disappeared at a pace that one would not have expected from a man of his build. He was making for home, and hell bent on sending out signals in all directions by the means at his disposal to the brown patrols. Having done their work the Senator and McGlusky went back sharply, for they were both men who when they had set their hands to a task meant to see it through in bitter earnest, and without loitering or delay. As soon as they reached Herosha's place of dwelling, which was the post office of the island, the Senator, without excusing himself for the liberty that he was about to take, produced hammer and nails from the bag that his bos'n carried and put up on the doorway America's formal claim to dominance over the island. Little Brown Dove stood watching these actions with a smile of such child-like wonder on her face, that any stranger viewing it would have considered that beautiful as she was, she had not a very high order of intelligence inside her well-groomed head, but anyone arriving at that conclusion would have been woefully misjudging the Little Brown Dove, but she was too consummate an actress to give away her real feelings to anybody's eyes. As soon as the ceremony of annexation was over, the Senator, McGlusky and the sailors moved

off towards their boats, but as soon as they had disappeared Herosha came out of a hidden room and began to peruse the document of State that was nailed to the post office door.

Turning just as he was about to enter his boat, McGlusky saw the trader make a motion as though he were going to destroy the placard, and immediately Mac swung round from his boat and went striding back to Herosha's place, followed by Ching How. As they travelled the Chinese, trotting alongside McGlusky's long-striding legs, looked up and said in an earnest manner:

"Will the Great One be so good as to listen to a word from this Humble One?"

"Sure thing," replied McGlusky, and then added: "What have you to say, Ching How? Spit it out quickly. I don't want that brown beetle standing just inside his own doorway to hear anything that passes between you and myself."

"That, O Great One," answered Ching How, "is wisdom speaking from your mouth, this is the thing that I would like to say: 'Do not underrate the lust for revenge that dwells in the brain of the Japanese who has been thwarted by you.'"

McGlusky, so inclined always to be impetuous, halted in his stride, and looking down into the clean-cut handsome face of the Chinese, he said:

"Are you speaking now on general principles, Ching How, or is there any particular reason for this warning?"

"There is a particular reason, O Great One," came the earnest answer. "This is the reason: When I was spying for you in the home of Herosha I learned that all his life's ambitions are wrapped up in the success of the Japanese in this island; he hopes to be made Governor here if the Japanese seize the island, and that would be a great advance in life for a man in the position

of Herosha. If," he added, "you upset his life's plans, life itself will not be of much use to that brown ex-naval sailor. He was only a petty officer aboard his ship, and he has worked for the annexation of this island by his government with all the diligence that was in him, and all the cunning. Strip him of the fruits of his reward and he will be capable of any act of madness; when a brown man runs amok he is prepared to commit hari-kari in more ways than one. So be wise, Great One."

Standing just within the doorway of his place of business, Herosha was jeering bitterly at the Little Brown Dove, saying:

"You were fooled by that big sailor man whom you considered to be nothing but a piece of clay in your fingers for you to mould as you would."

The Brown Dove made a petulant movement with her hands but said no words, and her father, continuing, flung taunts and jeers in the little beauty's face, saying:

"You threw yourself into this big man's arms, you gave yourself, you thought that you were making him your tool, he was drawing your brains out of your body. Your brains," he sneered venomously, "you have no brains, you are only fit to be returned to Tokio to be put into the big public brothel to earn your marriage dot, and go and be the woman of any man who will be fool enough to want you as a wife. This man," he continued a moment later, "this man, who is so big, so large, so seemingly simple and straightforward, has more brains in his fingers' ends than a hundred women such as you possess. All you think about, all you talk about, is the power of your sex, and even at that game he beat you, making use of you whilst he formed his own estimate of our plans here. He told you that he was a simple trader; to-day we see him working with the government agent as the right hand man of the Government of America. Away, little

fool!" he exclaimed hoarsely, giving her a blow between her bosoms with the heel of his hand, "away, little fool, and play with the cats—that is all your diplomacy is worth."

Herosha was boiling over and choking up with fierce wrath, for what he had seen on the hill that day told him that all his hopes of advancement in life were doomed, and he stood ready for any maniac deed that might bear to his distorted imagination the semblance of revenge. In his fury he seized the document that had been nailed to the door and tried to tear it across, but it was printed upon canvas, that notice from America to the world, and Herosha, in his wrath, crushed it up between his two strong hands, and throwing it to the ground, he trod it underneath his feet, and he was engaged in this, to him, very pleasant task, when McGlusky, followed closely by Ching How, came up.

Only for an instant did McGlusky hesitate, the next he had seized the Japanese ex-naval man and hurled him back, and grasping the placard he demanded a hammer and nails to re-fix it, and at that demand the madness that lay so very close to the surface in the natures of the brown race, leapt to life, and Herosha opened the vials of his wrath upon the big man whom he considered had fooled him.

"Dog," he exclaimed, "accursed dog, you came here as a creeping spy, and this," pointing to the placard, "is the outcome of your spying."

Carried away by the vehemence of his rage, the brown ex-member of the Mikado's navy forgot himself entirely, and spat straight in the face of McGlusky, and the next moment he was reeling backwards to the other side of his store, for McGlusky's deadly left hand shot out from his shoulder and had landed on his person like a miniature thunderbolt, and Herosha did not pull up in his backward flight until his shoulders came with a thud against the opposite wall; striking it he fell for-

ward on to his knees, but rising quickly with the froth bubbling from both corners of his mouth, he thrust his right hand into his clothing, and drawing a revolver, pointed it with almost devilish speed straight at the chest of the giant who was striding towards him, and at that moment little Ching How, dashing forward, flung his slender body in front of the figure of the white idol who had won his devotion.

The sharp staccato ring of the revolver smote on the ears of all present, and before the echo of the shot had time to die away, Ching How had fallen forward into the arms of McGlusky, and one glance at the yellow face told the great adventurer that this brave and faithful servant had made the greatest sacrifice that man or woman can make for man. McGlusky seized the little figure that seemed so slender and frail in the clasp of his great hands and laid it down, and then with a bound he charged over to the brown man who was advancing towards him with gibberings and mouthings mixed with froth and foam which fell from his lips. So crazed was Herosha with his own wrath that he had not the sense to shoot again and put paid to McGlusky's long account, and before he could recover his grip upon himself, McGlusky was upon him. Tearing the revolver from the ex-naval man's grasp, he flung it amongst the goods of the store and then he wreaked a bitter vengeance upon the man who had slain his faithful friend and servant, Ching How.

McGlusky did not strike a single blow; his terrible nature was too deeply roused in him to put the brown man out of his misery by dulling his sense of feeling with smashing body blows. Instead, he took the man apart with his bare hands, took him apart until his yells woke the echoes near and far, and when he had finished with him he flung the grisly heap of what had been a man into a corner, and turning, he picked the body of Ching How up in his arms and strode away towards his

boat, leaving Little Brown Dove and the brown servant to try and straighten out and disentangle the limbs of the trader. One of the men who had accompanied the Senator from the yacht to the shore was a doctor, and he, seeing McGlusky striding with pantherish strides towards the boat, made room in the boat for the big man and his little burden.

"Come to the yacht," he cried to McGlusky, "I have all my instruments there; maybe there's a chance for the yellow boy."

McGlusky, white to the very lips of him, growled out:

"There's not a hope of life, doc, the bullet went home."

"You never know," replied the doctor, "until you've made sure. Do what I say, step into our boat and let us take you to the yacht."

McGlusky obeyed this almost harsh command, and the boat's officer had no need to give the order he did give to his crew to bend to their oars with a will. Every man amongst them rowed as though his own life depended upon it, and in an inconceivably short space of time the body of Ching How was laid out in the captain's own cabin with the doctor bending over it. When at last he lifted his head, he said to McGlusky:

"There is just a flicker of life left, but only a flicker. It may return with sufficient force to enable the dying Chinese to speak."

McGlusky took the doctor's place at the side of the almost lifeless form on the bunk, and watching with his heart in his eyes, the face of the patient who had given his life for him, Mac remained almost as breathless as did the victim. Suddenly the eyelids of the wounded one flickered slowly upwards, and the eyes showed wild and staring for a moment, as though the owner of the eyes had winged his way back to earth

from the realms of the Unseen. Then the slanting black eyes suddenly fixed themselves upon McGlusky's face and the light of recognition came not to the Chinese eyes alone but to the whole of the face, and a smile that was inexpressibly sweet flashed around the quivering mouth, and as McGlusky bent his head to catch any words that might pass those lips, the Chinese lifted the slender frame from the bed and with a spasmodic effort reached arms around the neck of the mighty man who was pressing close down upon the little body, and the next moment Ching How kissed McGlusky with a long-clinging caress full of almost passionate fervour, and then with a long quivering sigh the quaint little head fell backward on the pillow, and the soul of Ching How had gone out like the light from a taper blown by the wind.

"It's all over, Skipper, old man," murmured the doctor with a deep note of sympathy in his voice, "it's all over and the poor little yellow kiddie is at rest."

Before Mac lifted his own body from its leaning position he bent his head and unashamedly kissed the face that looked so strangely young, and as he moved his body to an upright position his eyes fell upon the breasts of the dead Chinese, and a startled exclamation broke from his lips.

"My God in Heaven!" he cried hoarsely, "look, look, Ching How was not a Chinese boy, but a—a woman."

• All the little group who were present began pressing round the bunk which, for the time being, had become a bier. McGlusky's undiluted amazement was written in every feature of his face, and his eyes seemed almost to be starting from their sockets as he stood with his dexter finger pointing to the now unconcealed bosoms of what had been Ching How.

"Great God in Heaven," he gasped, "a woman—a woman, and she gave her life for me."

For once the hard-bitten men who had pressed to the cabin door, saw moisture in the eyes of the rugged man of a thousand adventures who was smitten to the very core of his being by the tremendous discovery that he had made. It was Judy Hiscox who drew the sheet up over the yellow face, and composed the hands over the still little body, and then she linked her arm in that of McGlusky and drew him out of the cabin on to the deck. As they moved forrard, Mac suddenly halted in his stride, swung his body round so that he could look into the face of Judy Hiscox, and put this query:

"Did this discovery come with as great a shock to you, Judy, as it did to me?"

"N-o," murmured Judy, "I knew Ching How was a woman."

"You—you knew that Ching How wasn't a man?"

"Yes—I knew, McGlusky."

"When did you learn it?"

"Do you remember just before I left the *Bonny Jean* to go on my quest to America on your behalf, and on the behalf of the American nation, you for a moment forgot yourself when I was alone with you in your cabin and you kissed me with a passionate eagerness that almost scorched my face?"

"Yes," replied McGlusky, "I do remember, Judy."

"Well," came from the lips of the frontierswoman, "it was that very morning that I surprised Ching How in the act of dressing and discovered the secret of her sex."

"Was that why you so fiercely resented my kissing?" queried McGlusky.

"Yes," came the abrupt answer, "I did resent being kissed by a man whom I thought had been taking a Chinese woman on his ship in secret as his mistress, and I can tell you, McGlusky, that had my belt guns been ready to my hand at that moment, I think I should have shot you down, because I considered your kisses the

deadliest kind of an insult under the conditions that I thought existed."

McGlusky stood, his face looking unforgettably miserable, and then he said:

"Do you believe me, Judy, when I say that as God hears me, I had no more notion of the sex of the little, loving yellow heroine than anyone else on board. Never until my eyes a few moments ago rested upon her bared breasts, had I even a shadow of an idea that Ching How was in reality a very winsome Chinese girl—or woman."

"Yes, McGlusky, I believe you; if I did not it would make the sight of you loathsome for ever."

Mac paced the length of the deck some half dozen times in silence with Judy on his arm, and then at last he said:

"I don't know if you will quite understand me, Judy, when I say that, mingled with my sorrow, there is a man's pride that such a woman should have thought me worthy to give her life to shield mine, and give it so freely?"

"You would be a poor thing," commented Judy, "if you were not proud of so great a sacrifice. Poor little Ching How—dear little Ching How, it will seem hard and harsh to leave her here, buried in this alien land, buried amongst people who must hate her very memory and will possibly curse her when they look at the mound that covers her resting place."

"She is not going to be buried here," growled McGlusky in a tone that had something lion-like in its depths. "She is going back on the *Bonny Jean* to the island where I first met her, to be buried where there is one at least who will cherish her memory, old Quong Sioue-e-e. That old devil doctor will tend her grave and lay flowers upon it, for as my soul liveth I believe that he knew in his heart when he was sending her aboard my ship from that sweet little island in the

Pacific that she was going to her death for my sake, a strange thing to say, Judy, but that old necromancer held the skeins in his long fingers of many of life's secrets, secrets that would puzzle any of us whites to unravel."

"I'm glad, deep down in the wells of my heart, McGlusky, to hear you say that you are going to take the little woman back in her coffin, wrapped in her shroud to the sunlit island that does not lie so far away from our American land."

* * * * *

The blue waves of the Pacific were breaking over the coral-crested reefs that guard the entrance to Honolulu, the sunlight which played over the waters made each foam-crested billow appear to be dancing with glee when the *Bonny Jean* dropped anchor there. Lying only a few yards from where the *Jean's* anchor hit the blue waves was that soiled old derelict of the sea, the *Dirty Jane*, with Skipper Jo Starboard waving a welcome to McGlusky as he stood by his steersman. Soon the British sailor was aboard McGlusky's ship, shaking hands with his skipper, and in fifty seconds' time he was in receipt of the story of Ching How's death and sex.

"Darned if I didn't always feel there was something bewitching about that little yellow image," murmured the old sea dog. "Somehow it didn't seem natural that all the men with the exception of one on your ship should cotton to her as men seldom do cotton to other men. I guess it was the unknown witchery of sex asserting itself without betraying its secret; well, well, I'll go ashore with you, and we'll lay the little yellow image to her rest beneath a bunch of palms that I know of, where the sunlight and the sea blend in wondrous harmony, and after I have settled up with you for the

cargo of seal pelts which I sold in Frisco according to your instructions, we'll worm out of old Quong Sioue-e-e who are the people to whom Ching How belonged by blood and birth, and we'll send her portion of the spoil and a bit over to her people. Perhaps when they get that, and the news of where she is laid to rest, they will follow the custom of their country and disinter her body and take it to lay it by the graves of her fathers, but I hope to the Lord they won't, for that little streak of yellow sunshine belongs by rights here, where the murmuring of the sea and the whispering of the tall cocoa-trees, and the sound of the surf on the shore make a requiem fit for a princess of the blood."

And as old Jo Starboard said, so McGlusky did, and Quong Sioue-e-e, with a score of garlanded native girls, attended that funeral, and when Ching How lay beneath the green turf the native girls danced the death dance and chanted the death dirge of their people over the little heroine, whose splendid death had been told to their ears by the old devil doctor, Quong Sioue-e-e, but when they had all left, McGlusky stood alone with his massive chin sunk upon his chest, and slowly and reverently he bent his knees, as seldom they had been bent since he knelt by his mother's side in boyhood. That night when a golden moon had dipped to its rest, Jamie McGlusky squatted cross-legged in the hut of old Quong Sioue-e-e. Not a star lit the blue-black canopy that over-arched the world. Not a sound broke the stillness except the occasional splash of some leaping fish in the nearby sea, seeking safety in flight from some hereditary enemy. Quong Sioue-e-e said to McGlusky:

"For the sake of the life you saved in this island, and for the life she gave in repayment in the Arctic seas, I will make magic for you, great white man, because you are great, and your fame shall never die."

He rose and put out the light in the coconut shell that hung from the ceiling.

"Now," he murmured in a voice that was like the rich notes of a tolling bell, "you shall see the girl you knew as Ching How as she is."

"She is dead," muttered McGlusky.

"Fool," came the swift response; "life *never* dies—it cannot, it was at the beginning, it will still be—at the end—just life."

A space of time passed in utter silence, then, as a reflection is seen in a mirror, came the beautifully outlined form of a girl-woman, dressed only in a fleecy white gossamer mantle which only half hid the beauty of her golden-coloured form and limbs; and the face of the form was the face of Ching How, radiantly beautiful and glorified by sacrifice. Her little feet trod on a carpet of forest flowers, as lightly as a butterfly floats over earth-grown blooms. And as McGlusky gazed into the black eyes that beamed down upon him, the whole of the girlish face broke into a radiant glow of love, and McGlusky's eyes filled and he went his way to wander a while by the sobbing sea, for what he had seen had stirred him to the marrow of his bones, and he realized that one of the greatest of all secrets had been revealed to him: He, a mortal, had looked upon the immortal.

FINIS.